



L I B R A R Y

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B O S T O N   U N I V E R S I T Y  
College of Business Administration

T H E S I S

Commercial Education for the Blind

b y

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(B. B. A. Boston University, 1930)

submitted in partial fulfilment of  
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Master of Commercial Science

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The Blind Boy

O, say, what is that thing called Light,  
Which I must ne'er enjoy?  
What are the blessings of the sight,  
O, tell your poor blind boy!

You talk of wondrous things you see.  
You say the sun shines bright;  
I feel him warm, but how can be  
Or make it day or night?

My day or night myself I make  
Where'er I sleep or play:  
And could I ever keep awake  
With me 't were always day.

With heavy sighs I often hear  
You mourn my hopeless woe:  
Be sure with patience I can bear  
A loss I ne'er can know,


Then let not what I cannot have  
My cheer of mind destroy:  
Whilst thus I sing, I am a king,  
Although a poor blind boy.

Colley Cibber



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## Preface

The writer first became interested in commercial education for the blind through direct contact with blind students. It seemed that there were great opportunities for improving their welfare through this type of training. In this thesis, it has been attempted to present a representative picture of what is being done in this field in the forty-seven schools for the blind throughout the country, and to suggest future possibilities.

Since this is a comparatively new development in schools for the blind, it has been difficult to gather sufficient material. Little has been written on the subject, and it was necessary to rely strongly on personal interviews and on a questionnaire which was sent to the various schools for the blind. However, this has had its advantages, since it has made it possible to give the most recent and first-hand information.

The author wishes to thank the many people who have been of assistance in collecting the material. Inasmuch as Perkins Institute for the Blind is a local school, much of the information came from there. Miss Sawyer, Librarian at Perkins, has been of great assistance in selecting books and periodicals, as has Miss Fergerson, Head of the Commercial Department, in furnishing the author with the copies of typing included in the appendix. The other teachers and office help at Perkins have been very kind in allowing the writer to observe classes and to do other research work there.







## Chapter I

### History of Education for the Blind

Blindness always has been and probably always will be prevalent in the human race. Frequent mention of the blind is made in the Bible. The First Book of the Old Testament speaks of the men of Sodom as being smote with blindness. Christ had great pity for the blind, and in the New Testament are several references to instances when he cured them of their affliction. Their state has ever been a most unhappy one. At one time, it was considered sport to cause two blind men to fight each other so that the onlookers might be entertained by their futile efforts. Their chief means of making a livelihood was to sit by the road side or entrance to a public building and beg for what little they were able to get. Certainly, no effort was made to teach them to do anything for themselves or to be more happy in their pitiful condition.

After the advent of the Christian Era, attempts were made, in a few instances, to give them a more bearable existence. A hospice for the blind was established by Saint Basil at Caesarea in Cappodocia in the fourteenth century. In 1254, Louis IX of France established the "Hotel des Quinze-Vingts" at Paris for the many men who were blinded in the Crusades. Later, others, including women, were admitted. But even in this home, begging by the inmates was encouraged in order to acquire funds to help support the establishment.



The first efforts of which we have knowledge to instruct the blind were those of Girolino Cardano, an Italian physician. At about the same time Peter Pontanus, a blind Fleming, published a book on the blind and the possibilities of instructing them. From that time on, there were several treatises, in both Italian and French, written on education for the blind.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century there was a man named Valentin Haüy, who has been the greatest benefactor the blind has ever had and who is known as the Father of the Blind. His interest was aroused by the sight of three blind people stationed in a restaurant with musical instruments in their hands. They were supposed to be playing these instruments and the discordant sounds that they produced caused a large crowd to gather and gave much amusement, thus helping to increase the patronage of the restaurant. This made such an impression upon Haüy that he never forgot it. The result was that he was more observant of the condition of the blind from that time on.

In 1784, Haüy undertook to educate a blind boy that he found begging on the street. He was so successful with this youth that the Philanthropic Society entrusted him with the education of twelve indigent, sightless children. This was the first attempt at collective education for the blind.





A tireless worker, Haüy spent much time in collecting all the material available at that time which would help him to succeed in the mission that he had taken upon himself. Many of his later ideas had their foundation in this research work which he had done.

It was by accident that he discovered the use of raised print. The story is told by Mr. Gailloid, a later pupil, "Lesueur (Haüy's first and one of his brightest pupils) was sent one day to his master's desk for some article, and passing his fingers over the papers, they came in contact with the back of a printed note, which, having received an unusually strong impression, exhibited the letters in relief on the reverse. He distinguished an "o", and brought the paper to his teacher to show him that he could do so. Haüy at once perceived the importance of the discovery, and testing it further by writing upon paper with a sharp point, and reversing it, found that Lesueur read it with great facility."<sup>1</sup>

The discovery of the raised print was one of the greatest blessings to the blind. However, this did not permit them to do their own writing so that they might reread it and the only way to do this was to substitute a system of dots for the letters. Between the years 1819 and 1825, Charles Barbier invented such a system based upon phonetic principles.

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1. M. Anagnos, Education of the Blind, p. 21.



Due to peculiar orthographical arrangements and the general complicated structure the scheme did not prove workable until 1829, when Louis Braille, an instructor in the Paris school, and himself blind, worked out a usable alphabet which, with subsequent improvements, is the system used in the present-day schools. In honor of its instigator, this system has been given the name of braille. Without this means of writing and reading, it would be most difficult to educate the large number of sightless children who are today given an almost equal opportunity with the sighted to acquire an education.

Dr. John D. Fisher was the first to attempt the introduction of a school for the blind in America. He became interested in the idea while he was pursuing his medical studies in Paris where he often visited the royal institution for the young blind. After his return to Boston, in 1826, he kept the project continually in mind until in 1829 he succeeded in calling a meeting of such persons as he thought would favor the plan. The legislature was at the time in session, and many representatives from various parts of the commonwealth were in attendance. A committee was appointed "to consider what measures should be adopted to promote the establishment of an institution for the blind of New England."<sup>1</sup>

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1. M. Anagnos, Education of the Blind, p. 36.





A corporation was inaugurated and the legislature voted an appropriation for carrying on the work. Dr. Samuel G. Howe was engaged as principal. He set out first to visit the schools already established in France and England, where he hoped to get ideas that would be helpful in carrying on the work here. In July of 1832 he returned to Boston, bringing with him, as assistants, Mr. Emile Trencher<sup>1</sup>, a graduate of the Paris school, to teach literary work, and Mr. John Pringle of the Edinburgh institution, to teach handicrafts. In August of the same year, he opened his school at his father's residence, where he had six blind students whose ages ranged from six to twenty years.<sup>1</sup> This school soon enlisted so much sympathy and attracted so much attention that large donations were made for its benefit. The following year, Colonel Thomas H. Perkins donated his house and grounds on Pearl Street, which were valued at twenty-five thousand dollars, as a permanent location for the school. In later years this grew too small to accommodate the increasing number of students, so the school was transferred to a larger building in South Boston. Still the number of students continued to increase until accommodations here were not sufficient. Finally, the school was transferred to its present site in Watertown. This school, in appreciation of the unrestricted liberality of Colonel Perkins, is now known as the Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind.

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1. M. Anagnos, Education of the Blind, p. 40.



It was but just a short time after the opening of Perkins Institute that New York and Pennsylvania started schools for their blind. The appeals for funds were mostly appeals to the heart. It was considered a novelty and there was considerable doubt as to the success of such "nonsense" in a practical way. To the people who so liberally contributed to the financial success of the work, it was merely another form of charity. They were taking care of those less fortunate than themselves.

The general feeling toward this work indicated in the following quotation: "At the time the institution (New York Institute) was incorporated, so strong was the impression that the enterprise was one, which, though it might produce some curious and ingenious results, was not of practical utility, that it was a matter of some difficulty to find among our many intelligent and benevolent citizens twenty gentlemen who were willing to be appointed its first board of managers."<sup>1</sup>

Today provisions are made in every state in the union for the education of their blind children. Those states which do not have schools of their own, make arrangements for sending its blind to schools in other near-by states. The American schools for the blind have tried to get away from the idea of charity and to give their pupils the feeling that an education is as much of a right for them as it is for the sighted.

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1. New York Institute, Report, 1845, p. 5.





The first schools for the blind concentrated upon teaching the pupils the literary subjects and much music. It was argued that music is one thing which the blind may enjoy and participate in during leisure. These first schools also had a few training courses in crafts such as broom making, weaving, and piano tuning. The last was in line with the broad musical training advocated for the blind and has been one of the most lucrative trades pursued by them. Needlecraft and a few of the other home making arts were taught to the girls.

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## Chapter II

### Vocations for the Blind

As the object of the schools gradually evolved into training the blind to become useful and self-supporting citizens, more attention was directed toward a strictly vocational education. It was soon discovered that they were easily trained to be proficient with their hands. Because of this, many of the students were taught broom making, chair caning, mattress making, and repairing as well as other handicrafts. At first, the students were turned out to make their own way as soon as they finished their course at the school. However, the cost of supplying themselves with materials with which to conduct their business and the marketing of the finished products soon proved to be a serious problem. The result was that the graduates were dissatisfied with the school and felt that they had been badly treated.

This lead the schools to establish work shops in which would be employed worthy graduates who had become proficient in a particular trade. The schools furnished the materials, sold the products and paid the workers a weekly wage. This proved to have a twofold advantage; it made money for the school and gave the employment of a lucrative nature to the graduates.

Table No. I shows the percentage of blind employed in various occupations in 1910 and 1920, and the percentage of

# CHAPTER II

## THEORY OF THE EYE

As the object of the study is to determine the

structure of the eye, it is necessary to know the

principles of anatomy and physiology of the eye.

It is also necessary to know the principles of

optics, and the principles of the eye.

Of this, many of the students have heard before.

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sighted employed in the same occupations. It is interesting to note that there is a decided increase in the number in such trades as broom making, chair caning, and piano tuning for the men, as well as a decided decline in the number in farming and music. It is also interesting to note that there is no mention whatever of stenographic work until 1920, and there is no doubt but that this percentage would be even greater today.

As this thesis is to deal primarily with the vocational training of the sightless for business, it is important to note the large number of occupations in which a knowledge of the fundamentals of business is extremely helpful. In the list, there are farmers, hucksters and pedlars, clerks and salesmen, real estate and insurance agents, manufacturers and managers, telephone operatives, stenographers, retail dealers, and boarding and lodging house keepers, all of which are directly in business lines. These people are all going to have accounts to keep, letters to write, business dealings with other people, and numerous other duties to perform which will require some knowledge of the business principles and terms. If they do not keep their own books or write their own letters, it is certainly going to be to their own advantage if they know something of these matters when they are discussed with those who are doing their clerical and office work for them.



One of the biggest needs in the vocational education of the blind is a good course in vocational guidance under a trained vocational director. Today we are continually hearing about correct guidance for school children in our public schools, and there is as much need, if not more, for such guidance in the schools for the sightless. The blind child is taught to make brooms, do other handicraft work and then turned loose to drift. There are as many varieties of natures among these people as among their more fortunate brethren, and not all of the blind are adapted to doing handiwork, at least, not all the same handiwork.

Each school for the blind should have: 1. a definite vocational policy under a trained counsellor, 2. it should bring to bear upon the work, knowledge and experience of graduates who have succeeded in some outside work, 3. there should be a proper correlation of vocational guidance at the school with the State Commission for the blind and local agencies for the blind.<sup>1</sup> This would help eliminate much of the aimless drifting. One writer about the blind says, "It is probable that school teaching is the most suitable vocation for trained blind people, yet comparatively few are employed as teachers in schools for the blind."<sup>2</sup> He might have added that there are other vocations about which the same thing could be said. However, people are beginning to realize that there are opportunities for blind people in

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1. Berinstein, B., Outlook for Blind, "Vocational Guid. For Blind"

2. Heggie, J. T., The Higher Ed., etc.





other fields, and to pick these fields as they are suited to the nature of the person, regardless of whether it is hand or mental work.

There is an ever increasing number of blind people who are entering the business field. This means that the schools for the blind will have to devote more attention to subjects of a business nature. Typewriting has practically always been more or less taught in these schools, but more emphasis is now being put upon it and its importance is steadily increasing. In the California school, the children begin to learn typewriting in the fourth grade. This work is correlated by both the typewriting teacher and the home room teacher.

Once a blind person has graduated from his school or college, it is necessary for him to find a place among his more fortunate brothers and sisters, where he will be able to have a maximum of economic and social independence, and also where he will be least hampered in his right for the "pursuit of happiness." As the blind graduate has to rely upon the profession for which he is trained, it means that he has to compete with the very best of the college graduates and specially trained people. It is hard to convince an employer that a blind person will be competent enough to work in an office. "A blind person might be alright in some places, but, of course, his office always has special work that it would be impossible for one without sight to do." Nor can



the employer be blamed for this attitude. He will undoubtedly feel sorry for the blind and will gladly give money to help them, but to give them work is something different.

One of the best means of giving work to the blind has been the workshops, before mentioned, where they may gather and make articles that are sold, usually through a store connected with the shop. But this is for those students who have studied the manual arts, and, as we are principally concerned in this paper with only those who have taken up the commercial work, I shall not go into the subject of workshops. However, these people may use a commercial education to great advantage in this kind of work.

One who has become blind in adult life is, in many ways, more fortunate than one who has always been blind or became so at a very early age. The former has a knowledge of conditions in a sighted world, fixed industrial habits and plenty of practical experience, which, with an acquired sense of self-reliance will all stand him in good stead. He has a foundation already built upon which he may construct a stronger future than those who have nothing for a basis of action.

In a talk with M. Delihotti, Secretary of the Valentin Haüy Society for Adult Blind in Paris, he told the writer that those who are born blind are under a much greater handicap than others who have become blind, and that it is much more difficult for them to learn to become self-reliant. He even





gave the impression that those who are always blind usually remain helpless throughout their entire lives.<sup>1</sup> There is no chance for a blind person to learn by imitation. He must be told how to do almost everything he does. The four senses of feeling, tasting, hearing and smelling must do the work of the five senses that an ordinary person has. Also, the memory must be trained to hold things that a sighted person may be able to put on paper, or naturally remember by having some object continually in sight. It often seems that the memories of the blind must be worked to complete exhaustion. Sometimes when working with a blind person or listening to him talk, the writer has been amazed at his ability to remember things and have often felt that the memory would some day be taxed just once too often and would break. But the memory seems to be very elastic, and the blind go on using it as a huge mental storehouse.

Another hindrance in training the blind for business is the necessity of culling and picking those capable and worthy of holding a position. There are among the blind as many, if not more, from the lower strata of mental ability as there are from the higher. This means that for practically every blind person capable of carrying on in higher education or responsible work, there is one or more who is incapable. If an employer gets one of the latter, it is going to be just that much harder to get him to give another blind person a

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1. M. Delihatti, July 13, 1934.



chance, although the second person may be fully capable of doing satisfactory work. It is human nature to judge any group by the ones from that group with whom we have come in contact.

Harry Best says, "with a portion of the blind, however, mental limitations or impairment or defect seems to prevail to a somewhat wider extent than with the general population, this ranging from a condition just below par to actual feeble-mindedness.....What evidence we have seems to indicate on the whole a larger amount of mental subnormality among the blind than in the population at large."<sup>1</sup>

"In special investigations that have been made, blind children as a group have been discovered to test somewhat lower mentally than children who can see. That is to say, the proportion above the average is appreciably smaller and the proportion below the average is appreciably greater, with the former than with the latter."<sup>2</sup>

With this condition confronting them, the teachers have to pick those with the personality and mental ability best suited for business. This is where a good vocational department will serve a school to best advantage and take a great load off the shoulders of the teacher. Also, the trained vocational director will get better results and will be less likely to err in his judgment. Oftentimes, those pupils who

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1. Best, H., The Blind, p. 197.  
2. Ibid, p. 198.





are thought to be least capable while still among the blind, have proved to be both bright and capable when they go out to make their way among the seeing.

This is one reason why handicraft has been emphasized so strongly in education for the blind. People are under the general impression that all blind are inherently successful with the hands. Most every school for the blind requires the pupils to do some work in the handicrafts. One of the first things they are taught in the kindergarten is to use their fingers. They are trained to weave simple things, to knit, build and construct with blocks of various shapes and sizes. In this age of machine-made articles, it is rather difficult for the handwork to compete in price or quality with products made by machinery.

In looking over the occupations of graduates of schools for the blind in recent years, there seems to be a large number who are working as salesmen and store managers. In the report from the clearing house for the blind, there were the following percentages of blind occupied with business:

Salesmen . . . . .	14%
Independant business . . . . .	14%
Professions. . . . .	17%
Clerical . . . . .	4%
Miscellaneous. . . . .	<u>15%</u>

64% of the whole.

This indicates that more than half of the blind who are reported by the clearing house would profit from some kind of a business education.



Percentage Distribution of Blind Gainfully Employed  
According to Specific Occupation

Occupation	Per Cent Distribution		
	Blind		General
	1910	1920	Population (1920)
Males .....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Broom makers .....	11.2	14.0	....
Farmers .....	18.3	11.2	18.7
Retail dealers .....	8.8	9.1	3.7
Piano tuners .....	6.1	7.6	....
Musicians and teachers of music ....	8.9	6.6	0.2
Chair caners .....	4.7	6.4	....
Hucksters and peddlers .....	6.5	5.3	0.1
Laborers, building and general .....	2.2	3.4	1.8
Agents and canvassers .....	3.7	2.8	0.4
Agricultural laborers .....	2.3	2.3	10.2
Newspaper carriers and news dealers .	2.3	2.1	0.1
Clerks and salesmen .....	0.9	1.9	3.2
Basket workers .....	0.9	1.7	....
Clergymen .....	2.7	1.5	0.4
Real estate and insurance agents ...	1.1	1.2	0.8
School teachers .....	0.9	1.2	0.4
Carpet and rug makers .....	0.6	1.0	....
Weavers .....	0.3	0.9	....
Wood sawyers and woodchoppers .....	3.5	0.9	....
Manufacturers and managers .....	0.6	0.8	1.5
Waiters and servants .....	0.4	0.7	1.1
Telephone operatives .....	0.5	0.6	....
Lawyers and judges .....	0.5	0.6	0.4
Laundry workers .....	0.5	0.5	0.2
Authors, editors, librarians .....	0.3	0.5	0.1
All other and unclassifiable .....	11.4	15.2	56.6





Occupation	Per Cent Distribution		
	Blind		General Population
	1910	1920	(1920)
Females .....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Seamstresses and fancy workers ...	13.8	20.4	2.8
Musicians and teachers of music ...	15.6	9.4	0.9
Chair caners .....	4.7	7.5	....
School teachers .....	3.8	6.5	7.5
Waitresses and servants .....	3.5	4.8	13.2
Basket workers .....	1.6	4.6	....
Farmers .....	6.2	4.3	3.2
Laundry workers .....	5.0	3.5	5.5
Weavers .....	1.8	3.4	....
Stenographers .....	....	3.3	6.6
Carpet and rug makers .....	1.0	2.8	....
Agents and canvassers .....	3.8	1.8	0.2
Boarding and lodging house keepers.	1.9	1.6	1.3
Agricultural laborers .....	1.0	1.4	9.4
Telephone operatives .....	1.3	1.4	2.1
Retail dealers .....	1.5	1.1	0.9
Authors, editors, librarians .....	1.2	1.0	0.3
Semi-skilled operatives printing ..	0.4	0.9	0.5
Broom makers .....	1.2	0.9	....
Hucksters and peddlers .....	1.5	0.7	....
Clerks (except in stores) .....	....	0.6	5.5
Practical nurses and midwives ....	....	0.5	1.6
Laborers, building and general ....	....	0.5	0.2
All other and unclassifiable .....	28.3	17.1	38.4



### Chapter III

#### Instances of Blind Employed

Innumerable instances might be sighted of blind people who have been successfully employed, but it would not seem appropriate in this paper to present an extensive list of such instances. However, a few select cases have been chosen and will be presented for the purpose of showing what can be accomplished by capable and well trained blind.

There is one young man, a graduate of the Pennsylvania School of the Blind, who later studied at a business college and now has a position as a dental assistant. He answers the telephone, acts as messenger and office attendant, does typing, and receives fifteen dollars per week as salary.

An example of what can be done by a person with but slight sight is the case of the young man who manages an ambulance service. He trained with an undertaker and acted as an assistant. Finally, he secured some capital, through an interest bearing loan, bought an ambulance and hired a driver. He now has a flourishing little business, clearing an average of fifteen dollars per day.

In the New York Post of November 26, 1907, there was a small article about a man who was stricken with sudden blindness. He acquired a position as typist with a New York firm, taking dictation from phonograph records. The company was so well pleased with his work that it sent a car for him every morning and took him home every evening.

In 1918, the du Pont Powder Company hired a blind typist who used the dictaphone. He turned out work as well and as fast as any of the other typists. Miss Marjorie Stewart has





made quite a business for herself in New York as a radio critic, and was one of the first to take up that profession.

There is a young lady in California who is a hospital stenographer. She takes dictation that is full of technical terms, from nine different doctors. Most of her dictation is taken directly on the typewriter.

In Jackson, Mississippi there is a blind man who operates a filling station successfully, despite the depression. He handles customers, makes change, and keeps his own books.

There are so many blind men selling insurance that the American Foundation for the Blind has printed a special text for them in braille.

Practically all the headquarters for the blind hire blind typists. Miss Anna Walsh has been with the Boston Division for the Blind for a number of years. In the appendix is a sample letter typed by a blind stenographer at the American Foundation for the Blind.

In London the blind typists have formed a public stenographers' office, where anyone may go to have typing done or from where one may hire a typist for temporary work.<sup>1</sup>

When it is considered that so many blind people have been successful in a business way and when so much has already been done along that line, it would seem that a business course in a school for the blind would surely warrant a good deal of attention.

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1. M. Delihatti, Sec. of Blind Adults, Paris, July 13, 1934.



## Chapter IV

### History of Commercial Education

The earliest form of business education started in apprenticeship. But as the country began to be developed, transportation facilities were improved, business increased and there was a greater need for more scientific business management.

One of the very first commercial schools was started by James Gordon Bennett in 1824 in New York. Some of the subjects that were taught were reading, elocution, penmanship, arithmetic, moral philosophy, commercial law, political economy, English, and, if desired, French and Spanish, book-keeping, as well as some of the more, so called, cultural subjects.

In 1853 the first Bryant and Stratton school of the famous chain was formed. Texts began to be standardized, and commercial education soon became a recognized institution. Yearly conventions were held by the leaders of these various schools and the idea rapidly grew.

It is not to be wondered at that the tax payers soon thought that this type of education could be and should be taught in the public high schools, by modifying the classical program to make it more practical. In 1863 shorthand was introduced into the Central High School of Philadelphia and into the high schools of St. Louis. This was supposed to be the origin in the United States of a clearly definite



THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN SENATE

January 10, 1894.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE, IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE SENATE, MAY 1, 1893.

ALBANY: J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO., PRINTERS, 1894.

THE LAND OFFICE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, created by Chapter 108 of the Laws of 1892, has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of the report of the COMMISSIONER OF THE LAND OFFICE, dated January 10, 1894, in response to a resolution passed by the SENATE, MAY 1, 1893, and to express its appreciation of the thoroughness and accuracy of the information furnished.

The report of the COMMISSIONER of the LAND OFFICE, dated January 10, 1894, contains a full and complete statement of the condition of the LAND OFFICE, and of the progress made during the year 1893, in the execution of the duties assigned to it by the SENATE.

It is to be regretted that the report of the COMMISSIONER of the LAND OFFICE, dated January 10, 1894, is not accompanied by a statement of the condition of the LAND OFFICE, and of the progress made during the year 1893, in the execution of the duties assigned to it by the SENATE.

commercial education course at public expense.

At first it was considered a good course for those who were incapable of carrying on the regular classical course. But it has grown until today it is almost on a par with the classical course, and commercial students are picked as carefully as any others. When it is considered that the students who take the commercial course are fitting themselves to go into business, it seems logical that they should be even more carefully selected. The ability to use good judgment, good English, type well, take dictation, and to show a sense of responsibility, as well as a pleasing personality in general should determine their selection. A thorough and well-rounded business course trains the pupil in more than mere vocational skills.

The following quotation from the Teachers Forum emphasizes the need for care in selecting students for particular subjects:

"A girl who is moody, and whose 'blues' affect the quality of her work, cannot succeed in a job that calls for consistent achievement such as is expected of the Dictaphone operator. When a blind girl of this type seeks to enroll in a course to learn Dictaphone operating, the commercial teacher will do her a real kindness in switching her to another course. And this kindness will be not only to her, but indirectly to all the competent blind Dictaphone operators in the country."<sup>1</sup>

Another advancement is that present teachers of the commercial course must be better trained than they were at first. Originally, graduates of a business college, proficient in the skills were taken as teachers. Today, the teacher of business subjects, as well as the teacher of any of the other

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1. The Teachers Forum, May, 1930, p.3.





subjects, must hold a college degree and have a specialized knowledge of her subject. Also, a teacher who has worked for a while in some business office is much better fitted to train other people to do that kind of work. She has a knowledge of what one must be able to do outside of the skills. She can give her pupils much practical advice and show them some of the short cuts to success. A teacher with such a background is much better fitted to pick students who will be able to make themselves suitable for an office.

Since the beginning of the depression competition has brought about another advancement in the training of teachers, commercial as well as others. Practically every teacher today finds that she must continue to study after she has acquired her position in order to keep it. The result of this is that most of the teachers are now receiving masters' degrees or further specialized education.

The typewriter began to be a commercial success in the latter part of the nineteenth century. About 1886 the schools began to teach it. At that time it was adapted to about one hundred and fifty languages.

It is interesting to note that the first typewriters resulted from attempts to find a method of facilitating reading and writing for the blind. However, nothing ever came of these efforts for this purpose.

The first successful work on the typewriter was started by Christopher Lotham Sholes in 1867 at Milwaukee. His very





crude machine was called a "type-writer." It was six years after the advent of the "type-writer" that the first contract for machines was given to E. Remington & Sons. The first author to submit typed copy was Mark Twain.

In spite of the fact that the typewriter failed in the first aim of its originators, it has been a great benefit to the blind in helping them to compete with the sighted. It is the only method they have, outside of square hand writing, which is slow and crude, of writing so that it may be read by their more fortunate fellow men. Typing is, too, much quicker than writing in braille on the slate. Material written in braille requires a lot of paper and is very bulky to handle.

It was the blind that first used the touch system on the typewriter and demonstrated its practicality. It is now considered the only proper way to learn typing.



## Chapter V

### A Commercial Course for the Blind

In planning a commercial course for the blind, the seven cardinal principles should be kept as firmly in mind as when planning a curriculum for any other group of students. The blind, like any other person, must fit themselves to make adjustments in an ever-changing world. Let us stop here and examine the seven cardinal principles as they relate to the commercial subjects for the blind. These principles are:

1. Health
2. Command of fundamental processes
3. Worthy home membership
4. Vocation
5. Citizenship
6. Worthy use of leisure time
7. Ethical character

A commercial course in any school is directly concerned with the fourth principle, in particular. In a school for the blind, such a course would have less vocational value than in other schools, due to the fact that only the exceptional blind person can expect to be regularly employed in an office. Miss Jean De Baer, on a questionnaire sent out by the writer to schools for the blind, said in respect to this matter, "It is my opinion that only the student having a special aptitude for commercial work be allowed to compete in the seeing world, and they through use of dictaphone in business offices."<sup>1</sup> Miss Ferguson has great faith in the vocational possibilities of a commercial course, although she believes that only a certain selected few should be

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1. Questionnaire, Miss Jean De Baer, Lansing, Mich., Jan., 1935.





permitted to take such a course with a vocational aim.<sup>1</sup>

A commercial course for the blind would have a more direct bearing on the other cardinal principles than such a course for the seeing. A blind child must be taught or told about everything that he does. He has no chance to learn through imitation. A junior business course gives many benefits in this way. Every blind person aims to be as self-dependant as possible. Such a course can help him to secure this aim. The use of the telephone can be taken up thoroughly. They can be taught to use the ordinary phone, how to get numbers from the operator, where to call in such emergencies as fire, police, and other such calls. Then they will, in this day of French phones and an increasing use of the dial system, appreciate a lesson on these two phases of telephoning. The French phone is confusing to almost every sighted person the first time he uses it; think what it must be to one who can not see. Any blind person can use the dial phone and the writer has known blind people who had to learn to use them, and who would have appreciated being taught such knowledge in school.

The proper use of this instrument will have many direct bearings on the seven cardinal principles. In the first case, it will make a blind person feel more independent, give him a greater sense of ability, and help his mental attitude. Although this has no bearing on the physical health, it has much bearing upon their mental health, which is equally im-

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1. Fergerson, Mary H., Interview, Perkins Institute, March, 1934.

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portant. The writer knows of one blind man who always went to the barber shop for a shave. This meant having to be dependent on some to go with him and to call for him. It also cost quite a bit, which might have been saved had he been capable of shaving himself. Lately someone taught him how to shave himself, and now he always does it, thus he has become more independent. Being able to do that one thing has helped tremendously to give him more self-assurance, and has made him feel more like other men.

In other aims, the use of the telephone has a bearing. Take the second one, and it will be found that a blind person who can use the phone can save his family time, by making his own calls and some perhaps for them. If he is away from home, they know that he can step into a phone booth and call at any time without being dependent upon someone to make the call for him. He can use some of his leisure time in calling his friends and in keeping in contact with the outside world. If he is alone at home, he can, if the need arises, make an emergency call for the fire department or the police. There are innumerable ways in which he can use the telephone to benefit himself and others.

In a course in economics, the blind student learns many of the principles of business and government that the sighted person gets by reading his newspaper and news magazines. In the economics class, the blind student can be motivated to listen to the news broadcasts over the radio, to





be more willing to take the time to read his braille newspaper. He can learn to think out problems of every day interest for himself. He becomes more interested in talking with people and has something about which to talk. This makes him a more desirable companion and less of a recluse. If he is going to vote or take any part whatsoever in his town or city politics, he will be better trained for it. One of the members of the Board of Water Commissioners of Watertown, Massachusetts is a blind man, a graduate of Perkins Institute and also of Boston University Law School..

A course in commercial arithmetic or commercial law will give the blind person a command of fundamental processes. The former will help him in making change, in figuring any other simple problem that he may have to do, such as interest earned on money, profit made on a sale and the like. A knowledge of commercial law will help him to be a better citizen and may help him to keep himself from being cheated or taken advantage of because of his handicap. One who can take care of himself in this manner is a better citizen and a more worthy home member than one who needs to be looked after and cared for in such matters by someone else. A class in law or arithmetic is a good place in which to emphasize ethical character.

A course in salesmanship will always help a blind person to develop his vocabulary, for, although he may not intend to be a salesman, he will have a chance to learn more business



terminology, which should be of great use to him in his business contacts. Furthermore, the knowledge of salesmanship may play him well in hand if, as is often the case, he finds later that it is desirable or necessary to take up this profession. In the event that he is seeking employment, this knowledge will certainly aid him in selling himself to the prospective employer.

It is scarcely necessary to mention the fact that typewriting helps to fill the seven cardinal aims. It is through the typewriter that the blind person communicates with the sighted. It is used for writing his letters, filling in official documents, and taking examinations in the school for the blind or in any higher institution that he may attend.

And where is ethics more needed than in business or where can it be better taught than in a commercial course? It should be continually stressed in every subject taught, particularly in those subjects that have a vocational aim. In this age of big business and graft, the country needs to look to the training of its youth in the principles of ethics. One who is grounded in a sense of honesty, fairness, and upright character will not be so easily led astray. If an ethical character is made a part of the nature of the student, he is more likely to become a better citizen.

In his book on commercial education, Lyon says that "the curriculum of savage education includes two general groups of subjects, vocational and moral, the latter including custom,





tradition, and religion."<sup>1</sup> This ties up with what has been stated previously, that is, that business education and ethics go hand in hand, and should be so taught. Even the savage recognizes this. If a student is trained to think and act honestly at the same time that he is being trained in the skills, he will act accordingly from habit when he gets into business, and it will be difficult to change his ideals.

One of the serious dangers of commercial studies is in over emphasizing the vocational side and slighting the social side. In the case of the blind, this danger is eliminated, for it is still difficult to convince teachers of the blind that commercial work can be done vocationally by their students on any appreciable scale. They feel that the number who do go into an office and become successful is so slight that they should get most of their strictly vocational training at a business college after the completion of the course at the school for the blind. Outside of the training that the student receives from an advanced school there is the added advantage in their being forced to take care of themselves among the seeing and in attempting to overcome their handicap in competition with the others. The atmosphere of the business college is also more like that of the usual business office.

Although a person may not enter directly into business, he can use a business training in whatever he does. A housewife will appreciate some understanding of business in trying

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1. Lyon, L. S., Education for Business, p. 218.



to keep a budget. A home is as much a business as is Sears, Roebuck & Co. or the United Fruit Co., and it will make a great deal of difference to its members as to whether or not it is run scientifically. Much can be saved or wasted in a home. A smoothly run home means better care, food and dispositions for everyone.

The blind who work in one of the workshops will profit from some business knowledge. They will have to plan the amount of supplies, the cost of the goods they will use, and the profit they are able to make from the sales of their articles. They can better figure the value of their time and the amount they get for it.

But, on the other hand, there is the big number of blind who become insurance salesmen. These will have to have some knowledge of accounts and be able to write an intelligent and comprehensive business letter. They must have a ready command of the English language, and a convincing personality.

For the many blind who have paper and cigar stands, there is a need and a decided advantage in a business education. In a previous section of this paper, instances have been cited of blind people who are employed in business offices as stenographers or office helpers. The fact that there are so many capable of doing this work surely justifies any course for their training that the schools for the blind may give.

As far back as 1908 the Texas Alumni of the Institute of the Blind brought out, at one of their meetings, the need





for commercial education for the blind to give them an understanding of bookkeeping, commercial law, business English, and general business.<sup>1</sup>

A couple of years previous to 1908, experiments were made by Professor Ludwig Ahrens, a distinguished German savant, which showed that blind men made good stenographers, and that it took less time to train them for such positions than it does the sighted.<sup>2</sup>

It is rather strange that with all the evidence to justify the existance of a commercial course in schools for the blind that schools should be so slow in installing such courses. In a later chapter, there will be more about this, giving material results of a questionnaire which was sent out to the schools for the blind in the United States.

The Overbrook school in Philadelphia has had a commercial department for a good many years, and Miss Sarah Long, who is head of it, has made quite a success there. Yet, Perkins Institute for the Blind, installed a department of commercial education only in 1933, and they still teach no commercial law, commercial geography, or business English there. They claim that the student gets such a thorough grounding in the last two subjects in the lower school that there is no need to teach them more in the upper school. Although good English makes for good business English, there is more to writing a business letter than there is to writing the ordinary social letter. There are business papers and reports

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1. The West Virginia Tablet, Sept. 26, 1908.

2. Col. Index, March 8, 1907.



with which every one should be familiar and which one cannot get from an ordinary course in English.

In the May, 1930 issue of "The Teachers Forum for Instruction of Blind Children" Miss L. E. Larsen, who has made a careful study of blind dictaphone operators, says that at that time there were about a hundred blind men and women throughout the United States who earned their living as dictaphone operators and that they were well paid for their labour. She goes on to say that although the number was not large, it is enough to justify encouraging the bright, capable, well educated, and thoroughly equipped sightless applicant to put his or her best effort into learning to do his work.

In a talk given by Paul Grasemann, Director of the School for Blind in Westphalia, Germany, he said that one must agree to compromise the general education with the vocational. He stressed the point that the young student should be made to feel that he is important. He brought out the fact that the way to do this is to correlate their studies with actual practice, by having them participate in the school organization and in the maintenance of institutional order. He went on to say that "the chief means of attaining joy in one's vocation lies in a sound vocational egoism." In Germany, the blind must serve the same period of apprenticeship and pass the same tests as the seeing.<sup>1</sup>

The student must be educated for understanding as well as for skills. Although one may not expect to enter business

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1. Report of World Conference on Work for the Blind at N. Y., 1931.





he will surely have some business dealings. He should therefore train himself so that he will be prepared to meet these occasions as they arise.

Professor Kitson, in his book "Secondary Commercial Education", gives four major topics to think of in building a commercial course with a vocational aim for any group. They are: 1. Ascertain the occupations in which the graduates are likely to engage, 2. Analyze these occupations for the tasks and for the knowledge the performer should have, 3. Obtain material which will provide the information needed, and arrange in usable form, and 4. Provide opportunities for practice on the job.<sup>1</sup>

This is a summing up in a concrete way what the writer has been attempting to elucidate in this chapter.

Much work has already been done by leaders of education for the blind along the lines of trying to determine what work they are best fitted for and as stated before, they have usually concurred in the opinion that the blind had more chances for success in work requiring hand manipulation. It is quite possible to find out from old graduates of the school just what benefits they have received from the various courses and what was not taught them that they felt should have been. They could further point out material that they think is of little or no value to them as graduates. A graduate from a school in the West, when speaking to a class at Overbrook, Pennsylvania made the following comment, "If I could have

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1. Harry Kitson, Secondary Commercial Education, p. 176.



learned, while in school, some of the things you are learning about traveling, I would have been saved the embarrassment of asking many foolish questions after I started out in the world to earn my living."<sup>1</sup>

Some of this information will be unusable, but most of it will have value in vivifying and motivating the class work. Any school which has a good vocational department will do this as part of their work in ascertaining the characteristics of people suited for certain jobs.

Education of any kind is in a continual state of evolution. It goes through periods of fads and fancies, each period contributing some new idea or characteristic which will be permanently embodied in the whole. For this reason, no school for the blind can install a commercial course and expect to start as it will always remain.

The locality of the school has much to do with its purposes, aims and methods. In the questionnaire that the writer sent out most of the schools which had accomplished much along a vocational line of commercial education were located in or near large cities. In a smaller district, there is less chance for anyone to secure an office position.

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1. The Teachers Forum, Sept., 1930, p. 7.





## Chapter VI

### Results of Questionnaire

In starting to write this thesis, the author expected to find abundant material on the subject, but he discovered that definitely established courses in commercial education for the blind were comparatively new and that suitable material was not readily available. In interviewing Miss Fergerson, Head of the Commercial Department at Perkins Institute for the Blind, in March, 1934, it was learned that the commercial department at that school had been installed for only one year at that time. It was difficult to find what other schools were doing along this line. There is quite a bit written and known about the excellent work done in the commercial subjects by Miss Sarah V. Long at the Overbrook School for the Blind in Philadelphia. But it was not known whether the various schools believed the commercial course to be a good idea and just how many pupils could take advantage of such a course, and if they did, whether they could get the positions afterwards, or if the schools advocate such a course for background work to be used in connection with other work.

It seemed necessary to know the answer to these questions before attempting to complete the discussion upon this subject. The writer decided that the best way in which to arrive at the answers was to send a specially prepared questionnaire to the various schools for the blind, and thus get as nearly first-hand information as was possible.



A questionnaire was sent to each of the forty-eight schools for the blind in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Thirty-six answers to these questionnaires were received, giving much of the information which was desired and which it was impossible to ascertain in any other manner. Some of the information derived from these answers will be given below.

Of the thirty-six schools that answered, there were only six of them that had commercial departments as such and twenty-nine that offered some of the commercial courses as part of the regular curricula, and not in a separate department. One superintendent of the blind said that their blind children were sent to schools in neighboring states, but that work of a commercial nature was taught in the home to the adult blind whenever such work was thought feasible. It is known that one of the schools from which no answer was received has a very strong commercial department.

All but two of the schools stated that typewriting is taught and those two did not answer the question regarding the subject. The longest period of time given by any of the schools in which typewriting has been taught was forty years, in the school at Columbus, Ohio. Another school had offered it for thirty, two for twenty-eight. Of the others answering the question as to the length of time it had been taught in their schools, there were none in which it had been taught less than ten years. The average length of time was around fifteen years.

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1. See a copy of questionnaire on page 36, this thesis.





## Copy of the Questionnaire

I am writing a Master's Thesis at Boston University on Commercial Education for the Blind and should like to have some of the following information. If you would please answer the questions and mail this questionnaire back to me I should consider it a great favor.

Have you a Commercial Department in your school?

If so, would you please put after each subject included in your course the approximate number of years it has been offered and the grade in which it is offered?

	Years	Grade		Years	Grade
Typewriting			Business English		
Commercial Law			Commercial Geography		
Braille Shorthand			Dictaphone		
Junior Bus. Training			Other Subjects		

Is typewriting required of all pupils?

Are your students carefully picked for the Commercial course? Or may anyone elect it?

Have you successfully placed in a business office any graduates from your Commercial Department? If so, approximate number.

I should appreciate any further remarks you might care to make on the merits or demerits of a Commercial Course for the Blind.

A large number of the educators returned this questionnaire with comments which have been helpful and are used throughout the thesis.



There are twenty-eight of the schools that require it to be taught at some time during the school course. (In regard to this question, it should be noted that the blind enter these schools at a great variation in age, so that if a student entered in the ninth grade and typing was required in the fifth grade, he would not be compelled to take the subject.) There were four schools which said that typing was not required, but that practically all elected to take it. The rest of the schools gave no answer to this question.

Three of the schools answering the questionnaire stated that typing in their schools is taught in the fourth grade. One stated "from fourth on as needed," and another offers it in the fourth, fifth, and sixth years, while in a third school it is given from the fourth through high school.

The greatest number of schools gave the fifth grade as the beginning. There were nine that gave this grade, and most of these schools offered it through the tenth or twelfth grades. Of these, three offered it less than six years and each offered it for three years.

Only two schools gave the sixth grade as the starting year and one of these offered it for from three to six years, whereas the other school offered it only two years.

The seventh grade had the next largest number of schools, there being five who gave that as the starting year. Of these, two offer it through the twelfth grade, one through the tenth, one for two years, and the other in the seventh grade only.





There were three schools which gave the eighth grade as the year in which typing is first taught, three that gave the ninth, and one that gave any time during the high school course. The rest of the questionnaires gave no answer as to the grades in which typing is taught.

The result of this would go to show that as a general rule, typewriting in schools for the blind is started in lower grades than it is in schools for the normal children. It is evident that there is a great advantage in this inasmuch as the typewriter may be used almost immediately for writing assignments or at home for writing letters, learning to spell, and in all other writing. The school for the blind in New Mexico considers the typewriter such a help to a blind person that each graduate from the high school course is given one for a graduating present.

Fourteen of the schools stated that they give a course in commercial law. The school in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania has been offering such a course for twenty-eight years. Another school has been offering it for ten years. The rest of the schools which gave the length of time the course has been in their curriculum varied from one to eight years. One school offers law in the eighth grade, another in the ninth, one in the tenth, three in the eleventh, one in the twelfth, and four schools offer it for two years, in the eleventh and twelfth. The other schools gave no grade. This corresponds closely to the time and length of a commercial

There were three schools in the town, and one of them was a school for the poor. The school for the poor was a school for the poor, and the school for the poor was a school for the poor. The school for the poor was a school for the poor, and the school for the poor was a school for the poor.

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law course in the schools for the sighted.

A course in junior business training was indicated as being included in the curriculum of seven of the schools answering the questionnaire. One school gave grade seven as the year in which it is offered, another grade nine, another grades ten and eleven, and another grades eleven and twelve, while another stated "to be offered when pupils are older." The Minnesota school said that it was taken "briefly in our business Relations and Occupations course."

From this it is obvious that, as a general rule, the junior business training course in schools for the blind is offered to older pupils than in schools for the normal. It would seem that the reason for this is that such a course is usually one of general and useful information which should be offered nearer the time when the students might put such information to practical use, and before there is time for them to forget it. The longest time given by any school for the length of time this course has been included in its curricula is six years. The next longest time is four years, while two schools gave only two years as the length of time it had been offered. One school stated that it hoped to offer junior business training "next year." No other schools answered the question, as to length of time the course had been given. This, and the fact that such a large number of the schools do not include it at all in their curricula would indicate that it is still in the experimental stage, and that it will be so for some years to come.





The California School for the Blind gives a course in "business forms, making out checks, etc.", to be offered to a few advanced pupils picked out by the typing teacher for special training. These pupils, however, are given the course for their own personal need rather than with any vocational aim. This course seems to correspond closely to a junior business training course.

Nineteen schools offered business English in some form, either as a course in itself or as part of some other course, such as a regular course in English, with the typewriting or in a course in business relations and occupations. One school said that it was offered "occasionally."

Very few of the schools gave the number of years that business English has been included in their curricula. The longest time given is seven years. There was one which has given the course for five years, one for six years, and another has just started its course in 1934.

There were nine schools which stated that they include commercial geography in their curricula and one which offers it occasionally. Of these schools, the one in Jackson, Mississippi gave the longest time of inclusion in the program, the period of years being twelve. There were six of the schools which offer it in the tenth grade, some of these offering it for two years. One school said that it is offered in high school, and another offers it in the eleventh and twelfth grades. The place of this course in the curricula of the



Schools for the blind seems to be just about the same as it is in the public schools.

Under a place in the questionnaire for "other courses offered in the commercial department" there were four schools which indicated that they offered a course in salesmanship, and three which offered a course in business arithmetic. Perkins Institute was the only school which gave as an extra course one in office practice. This is a distinctly vocational course, and would be principally for those who intend to go into a business office after graduation. Miss Fergerson believes that pupils taking this course should be carefully picked. In her answer to the questionnaire, she said "Only the bright boy or girl with a pleasing personality can fit himself to office work."

In answer to the question concerning the strictly vocational courses included in the curricula of the schools, namely, braille shorthand and dictaphone, there are eight schools offering the former and fourteen offering the latter. The North Carolina school said that it hoped to offer dictaphone "next year." Seven schools offer both the braille shorthand and dictaphone. Five of these schools stated that only a few selected, advanced students were allowed to take these courses.

One school has been teaching braille shorthand for eleven years, but the majority of the schools which gave the length of inclusion, showed that it had been included for only a few years. The school in Columbus, Ohio installed the course in 1934.





Courses in dictaphone appear to be of longer duration than courses in braille shorthand. In one school it has been included in the curriculum for eighteen years, in another for fifteen years, and in two others for six years. The rest of the schools gave no number of years regarding the length of time it had been offered. In one school, it is offered in the ninth grade, and in the other schools that indicated the grade in which it is offered, it is in the eleventh, twelfth or to advanced students only.

In regard to the question as to the number of graduates that hold office positions, it was surprising to know that there were so many. Of course, the depression has made it much more difficult to acquire or to hold a position. The school in Columbus, Ohio stated that "there were one hundred (blind) dictaphone operators in Ohio before the depression, but most of them have lost their jobs." The fact that there one hundred such operators at one time and that there are still some of them left, despite these trying times, is very encouraging.

There were fifty-four graduates, not including the dictaphone operators mentioned in the previous paragraph, reported in the questionnaire answers as holding positions in business offices. Besides that, the California school said that they had placed "only those who **have** had additional commercial training." The New York Institute said that a few had done well in using the typewriter and other training in



a business way, and the Ohio school said that a few had secured positions without the school's assistance. Schools placing the largest number of students were those in or near large cities. Perkins Institute has fifteen graduates now working in offices. The institute itself employs some of these.

Although the number of blind employed in office work is small in comparison to the number of them employed in other fields, it is large enough to warrant some attention, and the most encouraging fact is that this number is increasing. Another factor to be considered in training blind pupils to go into office work is the diminished chance of their earning a living in the handicraft trades, such as broom making, weaving, and other such trades, due to the competition from similar articles made by machinery. There was recently a sale of handicraft work of the blind in a shop on Boylston Street, Boston. Although the articles were all very lovely and well-made, they were extremely high priced. It is evident that when it is as difficult as it is today to distinguish machine made goods from the ones made by hand, price will be an important factor in the marketability of an article.

It seems that the information gathered through this questionnaire is very timely. It gives first-hand data as to what is being done in commercial education in the schools for the blind throughout the United States.

The main conclusion drawn from this information is that commercial training with a vocational aim for the blind is





still in the experimental stage. Typewriting has a definitely established place in their education. Junior business training would be a profitable course, both vocationally and otherwise, to include in the curricula of blind schools, but it is still in its infancy and there is a possibility of great advancement along this line. It is obvious that there is a wide variation among the schools of the blind in the commercial courses, exclusive of typewriting, which are included in their curricula. There is abundant opportunity for expanding and improving the commercial work in these schools, and the writer firmly believes that, during the next decade, considerable progress will be made in this field.



## Chapter VII

### Typewriting

Teaching the touch system of typewriting to the blind is no different from teaching it to the sighted. It is necessary that the former learn the key board, how to make capitals and use the space bar. But there is a difference in teaching them the mechanics of the typewriter. They can not see to set the marginal stops, the tabulating keys or how far to back-space in order to keep the margin straight in an indentation. All of these functions must be done by counting and through the use of the back spacer.

Every blind person should learn to use the typewriter. Many of the schools for the blind start teaching typewriting to the children when they are in the lower grades, for they realize the use which the students can make of this knowledge throughout their school course. The typewriting teacher should give his whole time and attention during the typewriting period to the students. He should not have to divide his attention with a class in some other subject, as is too often the case in the public schools. He should never try to hurry the students.

The beginning blind typist will have to rely upon the teacher to tell him when he has a perfect copy. Most students of typewriting are motivated through the satisfaction of seeing their own perfect copies. The blind are denied this advantage. For this reason, the teacher of the blind must be



## CHAPTER III

## THEORY

The first thing which strikes the eye is the

fact that the theory is not a mere

speculation, but a theory which is

based on the facts of life.

It is a theory which is not a mere

speculation, but a theory which is

based on the facts of life.

It is a theory which is not a mere

speculation, but a theory which is

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more lavish with his praise of the work done and copies handed in. It is a good plan to have a bulletin board on which the best copies of each week will be posted. This board should be within reach of all the students and it should be made clear as to just whose papers are posted. Encouragement of the backward student might be achieved by posting his better copies occasionally, even if they are not perfect. The teacher who tries to drive his students will not get as good or as quick results as the teacher who is helpful and encouraging. Praise will ordinarily be more effective than fault-finding or scolding. Often, a blind student who is considered dull or slow-witted when attending a school for the blind will surprise everyone with his ability to progress in schools for the sighted. The writer believes that one of the greatest reasons for this is the fact that the sighted are more inclined to praise the blind student which encourages him to do the best work of which he is capable.

To give a dogmatic principle or method for teaching any subject is impossible. "There is no one best method of teaching that is most effective for all students, simply because there is no one best method of learning that is most effective to all students."<sup>1</sup> But there are some general principles which will help in any class.

The laws of learning as pointed out by Professor Lomax should be kept constantly in mind. The first is the law of readiness. This means that the teacher should have everything

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1. Lomax, P. S., Commercial Teaching Problems, p. 61.





ready to start the class the minute the bell rings. The typewriters should be in good condition and the typewriting texts and paper should be ready for use. The students' minds should be ready. This means that there should be a curiosity and an enthusiasm on the part of the students to start the work.

The second law of learning is the law of exercise. This means constant drill and practice on the part of the students. Typing is a skill subject which can be learned only through intensive drill and practice. However, the teacher should not fail to keep continually in mind an understanding of the aims and objectives in view.

The third law is the law of effect. This comes as the student gets some knowledge of the fundamentals of typewriting and begins to use this knowledge in a practical way. He must adapt his skill in typewriting to writing his themes in English classes, doing exercises for other classes, writing letters to his friends, and in writing any material to be read by a sighted person. If later the student takes either the braille shorthand or dictaphone course, he will need to adapt his knowledge of typewriting to transcribing material.

Much of the success in typing depends upon getting the right habits from the very start. The teacher should watch carefully to see that the blind student does not "feel" for the right key. It is just as important to stop this habit with the blind as it is to keep the sighted student from look-





ing at the keyboard. The student should realize that he can not perfect himself in typewriting in a few weeks or even a few months. The teacher should emphasize the memorization and mastery of the keyboard before he gives the student any lengthy copy. As the blind usually have their memories highly developed, this may readily be accomplished.

In an article in a recent issue of the Balance Sheet, a teacher in a mid-western high school says, "One of the first duties of the instructor is to get pupils to feel comfortable and at ease at the typewriter. The teacher should conduct the work so as to remove all feeling of fear, as worry or fear lowers efficiency. Pupils will not do good work if they are under a nervous tension. The learner's mental attitude will either make learning easy or difficult....

"The teacher needs to be a friendly guide and leader; never a driver....The teacher's attitude must be one of such interest and enthusiasm that pupils will catch it."<sup>1</sup>

This same writer suggests the use of a class median as a motivation for better work. The students become class-conscious and wish to see the improvement of the group over a period of time. Having a definite goal at a definite time, gives the pupils something to strive and work for.

In the same issue of the Balance Sheet there is another article entitled "Tell You How to Teach Typewriting? No!"<sup>2</sup> This title speaks for itself and plainly indicates the author's

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1. Quinette, A. H., Balance Sheet, Oct., 1934, "Ideas on the Teaching of Typewriting" p. 55.

2. Ayars, C. M., Balance Sheet, Oct., 1934, p. 78.



views on having any hard and fast rules to be followed by typing instructors. She believes that for the first few weeks, through the novelty of using the machine, the typing class is easily motivated. It is after the novelty has worn off and when the practice has become work, that the teacher must find other means for motivating the class.

Her plan is to teach the students the whole keyboard by words or phrases. She gives the student experience in writing in higher units from the start. When Miss Ayars feels that the interest of the class is beginning to lag and the work to become tiresome, she allows the pupils to bring in an occasional piece of work from other classes or suggests to them some topics about which they may write at will on the typewriter.

The teacher should be constantly on the alert to find the special needs of each pupil. Whenever necessary, special drills should be given to correct faulty technique. And, above all, the teacher should remember always to be patient and understanding with the slower pupils.

Speed should not be forced upon the student, but should come to him gradually and naturally. He should always be aware of the need of accuracy and neatness before speed.

It is most difficult to teach spacing and centering to the blind pupil. He will have to learn to center material entirely by mechanical means. For this reason, the students are given designs in braille which they must reproduce on





paper by means of one key of the typewriter. This design (copies of which will be found in the appendix) may be in the form of a butterfly or some other simple figure. This work is entirely for the purpose of facilitating the student's ability to center material. The perfect copies of these designs might be posted in a large scrap book, and the book placed where the pupils may go at any time to "see" their work and to show it to their friends. The blind student will take particular delight in showing these designs to any sighted friends who might visit him. The blind take great pride in being able to do work of this nature and it lessens the gulf between them and the sighted.

The teacher should not fail to care for individual differences. In St. Louis, it was found in giving dictaphone tests (in a school for the sighted) that one girl continually struck "s" for "a" and vice versa. The teacher declared her a total failure, but upon inspection, it was found that the middle finger of the left hand had been broken and never properly reset, so that it was slightly bent back. The girl had tried to type without using the broken finger. Some exercises were given her which included much use of that finger and in this way it was strengthened and straightened, so that she was able to type as well as the other students.<sup>1</sup>

The main objective in learning to type correctly is to leave the mind free for the material which is being typed. this means that the manual dexterity and technical efficiency

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1. Journal of Business Education, July, 1929, p. 20.



is subordinate to intellectual and educational results. Particularly must the blind student have his mind free of the actual typing, as he will need to think more about what is being written and about his spelling. If there is no one at hand to read back the material for errors, he will have no way to make corrections. Therefore, he must word his material as nearly correct as is possible the first time.

As the blind usually start to learn typing at an earlier age than the sighted, it is essential that they should not be rushed for speed. Although it is possible for them to work at smooth, regular speed that will in time enable them to compete with any ordinary typist. One youth, a graduate of Overbrook, wrote, in a two-minute sentence speed test, a hundred and thirty-five words a minute without difficulty, when under observation. On straight dictated material, he can write comfortably and continuously at the rate of sixty-five words a minute.<sup>1</sup>

The young pupils should be given simple material that is readily understood by them. If they are allowed to use the typewriter occasionally to write a letter home or to some friend, it will encourage them and give them the feeling that they are deriving a definite benefit from their study.

The use of music in typing classes is very helpful in aiding the pupils to acquire an even, rhythmic stroke. Particularly is this true of the blind. Such a stimulus helps to make the work more enjoyable and interesting to students.

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1. Long, S. V., Teachers Forum, "Experiments in Commercial Education at Overbrook", Sept., 1930, p. 8.





The teacher may procure the Rational Rhythm Typewriting Records from the Gregg Publishing Company of New York and Chicago. They have been used in the Overbrook School, and the children enjoy the music and do much better work by it. When the stimulus of sight in our handicraft is denied, the lack can be made up for, to some extent, in this manner.

Generally speaking, typewriting is taught to the blind on the same broad principles that it is taught to the sighted, with a little more individual attention given to the blind student. This necessitates more work for the teacher but the classes are usually fairly small in schools for the blind and this should make the problem of individual attention to each student less difficult.

Several of the typing texts are now put into braille. The Perkins Institute in Watertown, Massachusetts uses the Twentieth Century and Eldridge Typing Texts and finds it quite satisfactory. The school at Overbrook, Pennsylvania uses Scientific Typewriting, published by the American Printing House for the Blind. With the exception of the designs which are given for practice in centering, the same exercises, supplemented by material dictated from other texts, are given in the same manner as in an ordinary course in typing for the sighted. Of course, the copy for the blind is in braille. As the teacher of the blind is usually a sighted person, it is necessary to use a text that is also in print. It is important that the teacher of typing be sighted, inasmuch as it very important that he watch the position of the hand and



fingers. Furthermore, in correcting the papers it is very necessary to have the power of sight.

It is of great value to the students if they have a thorough understanding of the functions and operation of every working part of the machine. A blind typist must especially be able to know instantly when a mistake is made, and a very few should be made, for, when a blind person is doing office work, it will be impossible to have someone else make erasures for him. That would slow up the work of two people, and would make the blind worker unpopular and of little value. He should be so accurate in his typing that it would not be necessary to depend upon others to help him in such matters.





## Chapter VIII

## Braille Shorthand

As braille shorthand is a subject which will be used by the blind for a vocational purpose only, it should be taught to only those who have other qualifications that will recommend them for a position upon graduation. That means that the student should have the ability to do work in an office where he will have a greater or less amount of responsibility and independent thinking. He should have character, personality that is pleasing to others, and the ability to adapt himself to new surroundings. In recommending students to this subject, the teacher should be mindful of the necessity of such qualifications. However, he should not allow mere personal prejudices to influence his recommendations, for it is impossible for one person to make an accurate evaluation of such abstract qualities in another person. If the school has a vocational department, the student will profit from a talk with the vocational counsellor before deciding definitely to prepare himself for an office position.

There are also other qualifications to be considered before allowing a student to study braille shorthand. One of these is his ability to spell correctly. In an article in the Forum, I. S. Wampler, Superintendent of the Tennessee School for the Blind, stated, "Not every one who would like to learn the system is able to go through with it, and I would recommend it to no one who is not a good speller, a



good composer, and thoroughly accurate, as well as speedy with the typewriter."<sup>1</sup> The superintendent of the Ohio School for the Blind pointed out, in his reply to the questionnaire, "The greatest handicap a blind person has in this work (braille shorthand and dictaphone) is the inability to spell, in spite of the fact that spelling is stressed in most institutions." At Perkins Institute, the students are required to take spelling up to the time of their graduation from high school.

The braille shorthand is taken down by means of a small machine with six keys and a spacer. The symbols are recorded on a roll of braille paper, resembling a spool of tape. When the typist is ready to transcribe the material, the braille notes are unrolled through a simple grooved device on the edge of the desk, convenient to the typewriter, where the typist may easily pass his fingers over the paper as he proceeds with the copy.

Here is a good place to mention the importance of ambidexterity in reading braille. If the blind typist can read with either hand, it will be a great advantage to him. When the blind child is first taught to read, he should learn to use either hand and one hand should not advance faster than the other.

Phonetic writing is the basis of the braille shorthand system. Many of the contractions are adapted from the Gregg Shorthand System, and the Gregg Company has published a text in braille for the blind users of their system. The word

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1. Wampler, I. S., Teachers Forum, Feb., 1929, "Braille Shorthand", p. 2.





"pneumatic" is represented by the letters "NUMTK". A small "d" stands for the words "distinguished" "during" and "surely", while the capital "D" stands for the words "do" "day" "different" and "due". Certain signs stand for whole phrases, as "AA" stands for "as soon as possible", "AAA" stands for "as early as possible", "AAAA" "at the earliest possible moment." "Dear Sir" and "Dear Madam" are represented by "DS" and "DM" respectively. Braille shorthand is like any other shorthand, in that it is merely a system of symbols and contractions that enables the blind stenographer to take down rapidly and in braille what she has heard.

There are several makes of braille shorthand machines in use. The Tennessee School for the Blind has for many years been using successfully the Stainsby-Wayne Braille Shorthand Writer, which is purchased from the National Institute for the Blind in London, England. Several years ago the Howe Memorial Press of Perkins Institute started to make a machine of its own. It is somewhat similar to the Stainby-Wayne machine, but smaller and easier to handle. Perkins Institute makes general use of this machine at the present time.

In a visit to Perkins Institute last spring, the author was fortunate enough to be able to watch one of the students take dictation on a braille machine. The abbreviations and word groups that the operator used were exactly the same as those learned by the author in a Gregg Shorthand course. A speed comparable with written shorthand may readily be ac-





complished with this machine, but like much of the work the blind do, it depends a great deal upon the operator's ability to remember the symbols and contractions. If he must stop to think of them, he is lost. Also, he must remember the contractions long enough to be able to read back his writing. One blind student says, "That's easy. Braille writing is nothing but shorthand anyway. We always write by sound rather than the way the words are correctly spelled. If we didn't, we would never get through." There were, however, no more than about five or six pupils at Perkins who were taking braille.

Mr. Wampler has summed up the subject of braille shorthand very aptly in the final paragraph of his article in the Teachers Forum. He concludes, "Now let me give the final warning: Not everyone should rush into braille shorthand. It takes a long time and hard work to get it to the point where it can be used. Only those of more than average ability should undertake it, and these should be willing to pay the price....However, for those who are prepared for it and adapted to the work, braille shorthand holds out a new and encouraging chance. In connection with typing and dictaphone operating it equips the totally blind to compete with the seeing in every way except filing."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Ibid, page 3.





## Chapter IX

## Dictaphone Operating

Dictaphone operating has possibilities other than vocational in its use for the blind. It can be used as an aid to the student in studying. If he has a report or a lengthy theme to write for some other class, he may do his thinking aloud to the dictaphone. Then he hears his thoughts read back to him and he may make corrections and changes before putting the final copy on paper by means of the typewriter. The chief objection to the use of the dictaphone in this manner is the expense, but it is a possibility which should not be overlooked. It is difficult for a blind person to be always dependent upon someone else to read back his copy to him, and there is no other way in which he can correct his errors.

Many offices of the present time are using the dictaphone almost entirely. It eliminates the necessity of having the stenographer present at the time the letter is dictated. This is particularly advantageous in an office where one girl does the typing for many men or in an office where there is a large number of stenographers. By means of the dictaphone the "boss" may play his golf in the afternoon and dictate his letters in the evening after the stenographer has gone. The letters are then ready to be typed the first thing in the morning. It thus makes it possible for both the employer and the employee to plan the time in a most suitable manner.



The person dictating the letters talks directly into a long, flexible tube which records the words on a cylinder record. The typist puts this record on her machine which has, instead of a mouthpiece, earpieces that rest lightly over the ears much like a pair of ear-muffs.

After the material is transcribed, the record is removed from the typist's machine and placed in a shaving machine. This machine shaves the surface of the record until it is as smooth and as new in appearance as ever, and ready for reuse. Each cylinder can be used from a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five times, or until it becomes too thin for further recordings.

While the cylinder is in the transcribing machine, the typist may start and stop it at will, so that he has to listen only to what he can comfortably type at a time. If some words are unintelligible to him, he may turn back as many times as necessary to get the sense of the material. Not everyone has a voice that is clear and the typist may interrupt the dictaphone for a repetition at any time without annoying his employer.

What was said in regard to the necessity of a blind person's ability to spell before taking up braille shorthand holds true equally for dictaphone work. Just as it is one of the biggest draw-backs to the braille shorthand operator, it is for the dictaphone operator. There are dictionaries in braille, but, like other braille books, they are very



The system described in the following pages is a simple one, but it is one that has been found to be very effective in the treatment of the various forms of insanity. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the mind, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the body. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the soul, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the spirit.

It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the mind, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the body. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the soul, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the spirit. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the mind, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the body. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the soul, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the spirit.

It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the mind, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the body. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the soul, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the spirit. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the mind, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the body. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the soul, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the spirit.

It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the mind, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the body. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the soul, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the spirit. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the mind, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the body. It is a system that is based on the principles of the science of the soul, and it is one that is based on the principles of the science of the spirit.

bulky and not convenient for ready and frequent use. Spelling must be stressed with any training for a position in a business office.

Obviously a blind person preparing himself for a business position must have a much more intensive and thorough training than a sighted person preparing himself for that same position. The former must train his memory to hold all that the latter may jot down on paper or look up in books. A sighted person is trained to know where to look up any information he needs, but the blind person must have all the information at his fingers' tips. It is important that he acquires this training while attending a school for the blind, even though he will probably attend a school of higher education later. In more advanced school he will receive an efficient training in independence and working with the sighted that will be a decided asset to him when applying for a position at a later date, but he will not get the training, in such a school, in the many things that are peculiar to his own need. Only those who are working constantly with the blind, and who are aware of their limitations and particular needs, can give the blind person this special training.

It is, however, through a combination of the two different types of training that the blind person will best prepare himself for office work. Every blind person who intends to do office work will profit from training in a



business college after graduation from high school. Studying in the two distinct types of schools helps him to assure himself of accuracy and other correct business habits. In a recent survey which was made for the purpose of determining the requirements for a good secretary, the list was headed by accuracy.<sup>1</sup> It is of great importance for the blind office-worker, for if she is inaccurate in her spelling, punctuation, typing, and transcribing, she will have no way of correcting any of these errors without interrupting the work of someone else. Another important reason why an inaccurate dictaphone operator should not be allowed to take a position is that his inaccuracy will be blamed upon his affliction, and, thus, he lessens the chances of the accurate operator's getting a position.

The Iron Age Publishing Company in New York has a blind dictaphone operator in their transcribing department who has been with the company for ten years. When asked her opinion as to the qualifications of paramount importance to a blind person who is training to become a dictaphone operator, she said, "The first requirement in my opinion is that the blind dictaphone operator should have excellent preparation. She should type, spell, and punctuate with complete accuracy. No blind girl can hope to hold a good dictaphone position if she must be constantly asking the girl next to her to look up a word in the dictionary for her, or to make erasures for her, or to read over her letters to see if she has made any mistakes.

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1. Hainfeld, C. F., "Secretarial Practice", p. 2.





All the successful dictaphone operators I know have mastered their typewriters to such an extent that they realize immediately when they have made a mistake in typing--and they do not make more than two or three mistakes in a day's work. When a blind girl makes such an error, she generally does the whole page or letter again, rather than to ask a sighted girl to stop her own work to make an erasure."<sup>1</sup>

There is always an opportunity for the blind dictaphone operator who is accurate and speedy, but before attempting to take the study for vocational purposes, he should remember that it takes time and patience to train himself for such a position. Miss Larsen, in the Teachers Forum, says, "There is room in the business world for new people who can produce work well, and the inspiring careers of the successful sightless dictaphone operators demonstrate that the blind who are adequately prepared can make places for themselves today."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Larsen, L. E., The Teachers Forum, May, 1930, "Blind Dictaphone Operators", p. 2.
  2. Ibid., p. 3.



## Chapter X

### Junior Business Training

In the September, 1930 issue of The Teachers Forum is an excellent article by Miss Sarah V. Long, Head of the Commercial Department at Overbrook School in Philadelphia, which contains some interesting and pertinent information on what she has done and is now doing in the junior business training course in her school. The pupils are enrolled in the course in the eighth and ninth grades. They are taught the meaning of thrift through the broader aspects of efficient earning, wise spending, systematic saving, and secure investing. The student becomes acquainted with investments, insurance, banking (checking and savings accounts), general business forms, kinds of information supplied by various reference books, filing equipment (and how to use it with braille indexes), the use of the telephone and the telegraph, safe methods of sending money and packages by mail, use of traveling information, elements of business law, types of business organizations, and other topics of practical information corresponding to the material which is included in a junior business training course in public schools.

For her text, Miss Long uses "Junior Training for Modern Business" by Kirk and Waesche which is published in braille by the Printing House for the Blind and is that same text which is used in many of the public schools for the sighted, especially in the public schools of Philadelphia. There are





a few other texts in braille which are available and the teacher should have access to several of the printed texts. In a course of this nature, a wise teacher will not adhere too closely to the text, but will adapt the material to suit the needs of the students. One of the most up-to-date texts on junior business training is that by Professor Nichols of Harvard. This book is not in braille, but is an excellent one for the teacher to have to supplant the regular text.

The junior business training course includes a drill on the fundamentals of business arithmetic. The student is taught the use of simple fractions, aliquot parts, percentage, discount and simple interest in conjunction with the work on thrift, banking and business forms. All the drill and information which is given the student, is knowledge which will be of practical use to him in every day life, regardless of the position he may hold or work he may do after graduation from school.

Miss Mary H. Fergerson, Head of the Commercial Department at Perkins Institute, started a course in junior business training in the year 1933-1934. Only a select few of the older girls are allowed to enroll for this course. As part of their training, the girls are taken to visit a bank, a telegraph office and other public business places with which, Miss Fergerson believes, the girls should be familiar. This practice would be possible to a limited extent only with a large number. But it is always possible to divide the class

A few years later, in 1911, when the railway was still  
 in its infancy, it was found that the railway was  
 in a position to take business, and it was decided  
 to build a new line, and this was done in 1912.  
 The railway was built, and it was found that the  
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into smaller groups, each group visiting a different place. One member might be selected from each group to review briefly the purpose and operations of the public place visited. The other members should help the one selected to talk in arranging her material at a group conference, by making suggestions and adding comments on the material. The teacher will do well to tell the students something about the places to be visited before the visits are made, and she should stress to the students the importance of their keeping in mind the purpose of the particular institutions they visit. Such visits motivate a class, train the students to be observant and give them a certain familiarity with business places, which they could not acquire otherwise. The reports furnish them a chance to work cooperatively, to organize the material and to acquire practice in talking to groups.

Another manner of motivating the class work is to invite a business man to come in and speak to the class about some particular phase of the business world. The students will eagerly look forward to any such break in the regular routine. Outside speakers afford the teacher an excellent opportunity to train the group to be an intelligent audience. Many an excellent talk is wasted because the audience is twisty and inattentive, rather than being alert and observant. After the talk, the students should be allowed to ask questions and if they are graded on the intelligence of their questions, they will be more likely to pay attention to the lecture and to think





before putting a question. The first part of the next class meeting should be devoted to a review and discussion of the lecture.

Outside lectures and visits to the public offices give the blind students a valuable contact with the seeing world and help to lessen the chances of their being shut out from the affairs of their sighted friends.

Miss Long says, "Junior Training for modern business is no longer an educational experiment. We feel that it has a definite place in the school program."<sup>1</sup> Although the writer feels that Miss Long is justified in saying that this course has a definite place in the program, he does not believe that it is yet out of the experimental stage. Perhaps it is at the Overbrook school, but generally throughout the country in the schools for the blind, the course is only slightly developed.

There are plenty of opportunities for the class in junior business training to put to practical use some of the knowledge gained in class. There could be a school bank, encouraging the students to save even small amounts. The books of account would be kept by pupils, and they would collect the money, compute the interest earned, and perform other necessary functions. A wealthy benefactor of Perkins Institute left in his will a sum of money to be used in giving to every pupil at the school a dollar on the donor's birthday each year. This would be an opportune time for a lesson on thrift. The students could be asked to volunteer information on how they



spent their dollars. Someone may have bought something at a bargain. This gives an opportunity for a discussion on bargains in general. The teacher has a chance to point out that buying a cheaper article does not always mean a saving of money.

The students might write and work out a short play, the scene of which would be laid in a business office. Use of business terms should be general throughout the lines of the players. There is a chance for discussion on how the people would dress in the business office, how the employee should act toward his employer and vice versa. The play may be presented at a school assembly, but it would be better to have it given in the afternoon or evening with a slight admittance charge. The students should be allowed to invite friends from outside. Some members of the class would take charge of having the tickets made, promoting their sale, the cash receipts and other matters concerned with the financial end of the production. Another group of students would have charge of property and would see that the necessary articles of scenery and clothing were collected and ready for use. Some of the girls might get the cooperation of their cooking teacher and make candy to be sold during the play. These girls would then have sole charge of arranging the candy and selling it. The class should decide what they wish to do with the money they have earned. Such a performance will include several topics studied in the class and will give the students a





chance to see the theories learned in actual practice. They will feel that they are learning something really worth while and be anxious for more such information.

Another topic which should be most useful to study and easily motivated for the class is the telephone. Some of the students can be allowed to make actual calls for information which is desired by the class. In cities where the dial phone is in general use, the students will derive much pleasure from learning to operate one. They can learn how to make emergency and toll calls. They can be taught the correct way to answer a telephone in a business office and how to operate a switch board. The telephone is one instrument which the blind can use as efficiently as a sighted person and whereas the telephone plays an important part in the modern business world they may be able to acquire a position through its use. Almost every daily paper has an advertisement in it for telephone solicitors. This type of work may be done very efficiently by a blind person.

The members of the junior business training class should be allowed to help the teacher keep the attendance records and to do other minor clerical duties. If the other teachers will cooperate with the teacher of the junior business training course, much of the work may be carried over and done in combination with work in the other classes. The junior business course should be one of the easiest courses in the program to motivate. The material covered is varied, practical and of vital interest to the pupils. There is enough variety



so that the interests of each pupil may be discovered and developed. It may act as a try-out course in schools where it is impossible, either through lack of funds or the size of the school, to have the latter. In the junior business training class, the pupils will become aware of many things which to the seeing are everyday occurrences. It is to be hoped that the junior business course will continue to grow and that before many years have passed every school for the blind will include it in its program.





## Chapter XI

### Business English

A knowledge of and the habitual use of correct English is an asset at any time, but in a business office, it is more than just an asset--it is an absolute necessity. A thorough knowledge and understanding of the basic principles will probably be sufficient to help a business person perform his duties satisfactorily. However, a course in Business English will enable the student to better apply the principles he has learned in a general course directly to business correspondence, such as letters of application, credit adjustments, sales letters and other correspondence constantly used in business dealings. He will learn, in such a course, how the business letter differs in make-up and tone from the ordinary social letter. He will learn how to make a business report, how to apply knowledge in typewriting skill, such as centering material, paragraphing and punctuating.

Most business houses have different size papers and letter-heads. The blind person has to learn how to use these letter heads. The English teacher should have several common types of letter-heads and show the student who is training for an office position how to keep them separate and in order by means of tabs with braille indexes. He should learn which size paper will look better with the different length letters and be able to form a mental picture of the letter to be written.



Of course, the student will get information on how to set up letters in the typewriting class, but he will not learn there much about the lengths and types of different letters, how to word them himself, and how to punctuate, since most of his efforts will be directed toward attaining speed and accuracy. The typewriting and English teachers should work together and the students should be allowed to type the letters for his English class as part of the work in his typewriting assignments.

In the business English class, the student acquires a familiarity with business terms. There are certain phrases common to different types of businesses or to certain branches of the business world with which everyone who desires to go into an office should be familiar. The stenographer who transcribed, "This is the first time that England has floated alone in the United States," may have known shorthand and been a good typist, but she certainly was not familiar with the business expression, "to float a loan."<sup>1</sup>

As the blind stenographer will have no opportunity to look up in books of reference or other letters when she is in doubt concerning the wording of a phrase or the proper punctuation, she must have no doubts. She must know, without uncertainty, whether she wishes to use a colon or a semi-colon. If she is working in a small office where she is the only one employed, there will be no opportunity to ask a fellow-worker for information. In the small office, she may

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1. Bartholomew and Hurlbut, The Business Man's English, p. 4.





have to answer letters of inquiry, complaint or to write letters asking for information which it will be her duty to compose as well as type. She must have a ready knowledge of the different types of letters and the expressions common to them in order to do this in the proper way. Besides being able to write a business letter, she should be able to talk intelligently with prospective clients who come into the office or call on the telephone. She must be able to talk with her employer intelligently, and it may be the letter of application which will get her the position.

Advertising copy and sales letters should be treated quite thoroughly in the business English course. Each student could pick some article that he particularly wants himself, and try to describe it so as to make the other members of the class desire the same article. This could be the first exercise on this topic. From these papers, the teacher could develop the points to be considered in a sales letter or talk during the next week. After the class has been thoroughly grounded in the principles of a good sales letter, some article with which the students are all familiar should be chosen for the topic of a sales letter which they are all to write.

To motivate the class in business English, the teacher may use much the same methods as are used by the typewriting teacher in motivation of work in her classes. She might have a bulletin board on which the best letters will be



posted each week. Every so often, these letters might be posted in a scrapbook, made and kept by the students. The students could also keep a notebook with a page written in braille giving the main points and the outline of every type of letter that is taken up in class. The best copies of their letters could be put in their note books, and kept for reference for the ones who were ambitious enough to continue their studies after the class work had ended. The teacher can aid them in collecting outstanding copies of the various types of business letters, such as sales and advertising letters. These letters can be read to the class, as samples of what good letters are. The students can put them in their notebooks along with the ones that they have written themselves. Each member of the class might write a letter in answer to an advertisement, asking for a free booklet or sample article. If, in connection with a play or some other outside activity, it is necessary to write for information, or if a mistake has been made in some article sent, the letter to be written could be taken up and discussed in the business English class.

The teacher of business English should be constantly drilling her class in punctuation. The material learned in other courses in English should be reviewed, with an emphasis upon its use in business letters. The teacher should read samples of correct business letters to the class so that they may accustom their ears to the use of correct





English. When reading these letters, the teacher should always point out the punctuation that is used and have a short discussion on why it is so punctuated. The students should be given letters and told to put in the punctuation marks.

It is only by continual practice and study that one can keep his English alive and correct. Any living language is in a constant state of evolution. The English teacher should become thoroughly aware of this and should realize that what was considered to be good form in a business letter twenty years ago may be poor taste today. At one time, it was correct to start a business letter with, "Yours of the twenty-fifth at hand and I beg to tell you...." Today, that kind of a beginning would be called hackneyed and stilted. Any business house that would send out such a letter would immediately be stamped as antiquated and nonprogressive. The modern business letter must be brief, courteous and clear. There should be no unnecessary words in it, as the business man in reading it is interested only in the information it contains. Still, there must be sufficient length to any business letter to make it forceful and pleasing to the reader.

A course in business English should have, at least, three aims:

1. To ground the student in the course in correct usage of every-day English, both written and oral,
2. To familiarize him with the set-up, forms, phraseology

1. The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the smell of the sea. It was a salty, briny scent that filled the air. I had never smelled anything like it before. It was a strange, almost comforting, smell. I took a deep breath and felt a sense of peace wash over me. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
2. The second thing I noticed was the sound of the waves. It was a rhythmic, soothing sound that filled my ears. I had never heard anything like it before. It was a strange, almost hypnotic, sound. I closed my eyes and let the sound wash over me. It was a sense of peace that I had never felt before. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
3. The third thing I noticed was the feel of the sand. It was a soft, warm, golden sand that felt like a blanket. I had never felt anything like it before. It was a strange, almost comforting, feel. I took a step forward and felt a sense of peace wash over me. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
4. The fourth thing I noticed was the taste of the air. It was a salty, briny taste that filled my mouth. I had never tasted anything like it before. It was a strange, almost comforting, taste. I took a deep breath and felt a sense of peace wash over me. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
5. The fifth thing I noticed was the sight of the sea. It was a vast, blue, endless sea that stretched out before me. I had never seen anything like it before. It was a strange, almost hypnotic, sight. I closed my eyes and let the sight wash over me. It was a sense of peace that I had never felt before. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
6. The sixth thing I noticed was the sound of the birds. It was a chirping, singing sound that filled the air. I had never heard anything like it before. It was a strange, almost comforting, sound. I closed my eyes and let the sound wash over me. It was a sense of peace that I had never felt before. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
7. The seventh thing I noticed was the feel of the breeze. It was a cool, refreshing breeze that felt like a kiss. I had never felt anything like it before. It was a strange, almost comforting, feel. I took a step forward and felt a sense of peace wash over me. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
8. The eighth thing I noticed was the taste of the water. It was a salty, briny taste that filled my mouth. I had never tasted anything like it before. It was a strange, almost comforting, taste. I took a deep breath and felt a sense of peace wash over me. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
9. The ninth thing I noticed was the sight of the sky. It was a vast, blue, endless sky that stretched out above me. I had never seen anything like it before. It was a strange, almost hypnotic, sight. I closed my eyes and let the sight wash over me. It was a sense of peace that I had never felt before. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.
10. The tenth thing I noticed was the sound of the waves. It was a rhythmic, soothing sound that filled my ears. I had never heard anything like it before. It was a strange, almost hypnotic, sound. I closed my eyes and let the sound wash over me. It was a sense of peace that I had never felt before. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. It was a beautiful sight, and I felt like I had found a new world.

and punctuation of business letters and papers, and

3. To give him further practice in expressing his thoughts in a clear, concise, and forceful manner.

Such a class will obviously give the student as much practice as possible, for it is only through constant drill that he will acquire the habit of correct English. Blind students will need more practice and drill than sighted ones, for they will have no other way to acquire this training after they have left school. If they use reference books or take correspondence courses, they will always be dependent upon some seeing person to read the material to them. A sighted person may learn much from the examples of letters which he is continually receiving from business houses, but the blind never can read them himself, and they are usually thrown into the waste basket before anyone else takes the time to read them to him.

As in other courses for the blind student who has a vocational career in mind, he will do well to further his study by an advanced course in a school for the seeing. But there are many ways which anyone will use business English, other than vocationally. It is necessary to apply for any kind of work, if the blind intends to secure a position. Just a few weeks ago, the writer heard of a young girl who applied by letter for a position which had nothing to do with letter-writing, but she received the job on the merits of her letter. This girl had had an excellent course





in business English in high school, and profited by it is securing the position.

There are so many ways in which a person may profit from a knowledge of business English that it seems highly desirable for this subject to be included in any commercial program.



## Chapter XII

### Economics

No lengthy report dealing with commercial subjects would be complete without, at least, a brief mention of the subject of economics. Many educators hold that the high school pupil is not mature enough to fully grasp and appreciate the significance of the material in such a course, and that this subject should not be offered in the high schools.

It is true that a mature person will be able to study the subject more comprehensively, but there are many principles and problems in economics which can be easily understood and will be eagerly studied by the average high school student. A high school course in economics gives a basis for further study for those students who will continue the study in a school of higher learning, and for the ones who will not continue their education above high school, it gives them, at least, a hazy conception of some of the fundamental economic laws. Pankratz says, "It is the high school graduates who form the majority of social leaders, and it is important that they receive a good education in civics and economics. Moreover, the children of high school age, the age of transition from childhood to the adult state, are particularly adaptable to important civic habits and attitudes. Especially in a republic, where economic problems are settled by the vote of the citizens, it is necessary that the schools should educate the prospective citizens and voters in this important field."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. Pankratz, W. C, Economics as a High School Subject, p. 376.





The blind who do not continue their education after high school will have little or no chance to learn any of the principles of economics which they do not get before graduation, for their chances of getting such information from books are slight, as there will probably be no one with the time and patience to teach it to them verbally. For these reasons, it seems feasible that they be given an opportunity to learn something about the more important economic principles while they are in the high school.

The education of blind children is a slower and more laborious process than the education of the sighted, and it might not be wise to burden the already over-crowded curriculum with another course, but surely it should merit some time and space in the program. A course in economics might be offered for a single semester during the last year of high school, or the more important principles treated briefly in the civics or history course. However, it certainly should be given consideration and, if possible, be put in the program as an elective.

Some of the principles of economics may be taught by means of debates, dramas in the English classes, extracurricular activities of clubs or in some other special way. In a club for students interested in the subject, articles and talks can be prepared and given, under the direction of one of the teachers.

If such a course is offered, the teacher should make



the material offered as timely as possible. In teaching the "business cycle", the economics of the past few years will afford excellent and abundant examples. This will make it of much greater interest to the students than if examples are drawn from more remote times. The students have some conception and interest concerning the more recent occurrences, and will, thus, be drawn closer to the subject.

In talking of the law of "supply and demand", illustrations should be brought as close to the students' every-day life as possible. For instance, if there are plenty of apple trees in the neighborhood, Johnny Jones will not give Jim Green two marbles for one apple, for he knows that he can go to Bill Smith and get an apple for one marble. But if there is only one apple tree in the community and that one is in Jim Green's yard, Johnny will have to pay the price Jim demands if he wants an apple.

The teacher of economics should make the subject specific and not too general. For pupils of high school age, general principles leave the mind confused and bewildered. They need to have subjects taught to them in a concrete manner, so that they will have a basis for further thought and study. The teacher should use only the simpler economic terms, and the terms should be clearly defined for the students. In a school for blind children, the teacher will do well not to attempt to show the meaning of any graphs or diagrams, however simple they may be. Such things make the subject so





difficult for the blind that they are likely to lose all enthusiasm for and interest in the course. If the teacher allows the class to hold discussions on some of the topics, she will find that the class will be more popular and that the students will take a vital interest in the subject.



## Chapter XIII

## Salesmanship and Office Practice

There are two other commercial subjects, salesmanship and office practice, which are strictly vocational, and which have been combined in this chapter. The former has little to do with actual office work, and is a well established course, already, in schools for the blind. The latter is seldom given in schools for the blind, because it can be taken to best advantage in business schools for the seeing, and because there would not be a sufficiently large number of students interested in taking it to justify the cost of the course.

As was pointed out in the first part of this thesis, a large number of the blind earn their living through some kind of selling. They may sell at stands, run small stores, do house-to-house selling or sell some such service as insurance or wholesale articles. Whatever it is that they sell, or in whatever manner they may be connected with selling, they will need a basic understanding of the fundamentals of salesmanship. It is not uncommon for the blind to use their affliction as a sales promoter. This should be strongly discouraged in the salesmanship class, and they should be taught to sell whatever they may wish to, purely on the merits of the article itself.

Since it is impossible for the blind to see themselves in a mirror, it is not always easy for them to keep a neat





and pleasing appearance, without assistance from someone else. The importance of the appearance should be stressed in the salesmanship class and the students should be cautioned to have someone to see that their appearance is good every day before they leave home.

Other material that would be included in the course would be practically the same as that included in a similar course for the seeing. The same texts could be used and the material would be presented in much the same manner. Whenever possible, students should be given actual practice by being allowed to assist in the sale of articles that are made in the workshops of the school, tickets for entertainments, and, if the school has a store, they should be hired as part-time clerks.

The writer feels that further discussion of this subject is not pertinent to the purpose of this thesis. There are many excellent books and articles on salesmanship, which may be utilized by the blind as well as by the seeing.

Contrariwise, office practice is seldom included in the curricula of schools for the blind. There is much excellent material written on this subject for the seeing, but in most cases, it would not apply to the blind. It would be difficult for a blind person to take an office position where it would be necessary to use several kinds of machines and to operate a filing system. Neither, would the blind person be able to keep books. The training that a blind person needs



in office practice will be partially given in the junior business training course, and any further knowledge of the subject should be gained in a school of higher learning, where the student would be in an atmosphere more like that of an actual business office.

Some of the general office routine might be considered more beneficially in connection with the study of dictaphone operating, braille shorthand or typewriting. It is doubtful if a course in general office practice is warranted in schools for the blind.





## Chapter XIV

### Other Commercial Subjects

The other subjects which might, and probably would, be included in a well-rounded commercial program are: Commercial arithmetic, commercial law, and commercial geography. As these are all, more or less, background subjects, and with little direct bearing upon the vocational training, they will be treated together in this chapter.

It is obvious that the main objective of a course in commercial arithmetic is the mastery of the fundamental processes. No matter what the pupil does after graduation, he will frequently need to make simple arithmetical computations. A blind person needs to train his mind to figure quickly and accurately, since he will not be able to jot numbers down on paper. Blind students should be drilled continually in mental work on addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

Drill work of this kind becomes very tiresome and uninteresting, therefore, the teacher must find ways of motivating the class work and keeping up the interest. Of course, new material will be taken up along with the drill work, and this will help to keep the students attentive and alert.

The arithmetic class should have to take frequent tests. The teacher should note the individual needs of the different members of the class, as indicated by the number and kind of mistakes that are made on these tests.



After the tests have been graded, the teacher should spend, at least, one class period on specially prepared drills, with the aim of correcting the students' weaknesses as revealed in the tests. The tests should be simple and easy, but still as practical as possible. The problems which the student is asked to solve should be concrete and in accordance with common practice. It is better to have them deal with things with which they are familiar, so that as much interest as is possible will be maintained.

In an article in the Journal of Business Education, Miss Bessie Norris suggests the segregation of pupils into classes according to their ability. Those with the less ability would not attempt as difficult and complicated problems as the more able ones. Instead, the former would be trained to have a ready knowledge of the simpler problems involving the fundamentals.<sup>1</sup> In a school for the blind, this plan would be particularly advantageous. As has been stated in a previous chapter, the average mentality of the blind is not as high as it is in the schools for the sighted, and it would be only fair to those blind students with the higher ability to give them a chance to advance at a swifter pace.

The course in commercial arithmetic should deal with such topics as practical measurements, percentage and graphic comparisons, trade and cash discounts, transportation charges, cost and selling price of articles, profit and loss, wages, insurance, domestic and foreign exchange, interest, taxes

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1. Norris, B. The J. of Bus. Ed., "Bus. Arith. as a Science," p. 22.





and business instruments. The commercial arithmetic class will be the logical place to give the blind students some knowledge of keeping simple accounts for their own use. As it would be an impossibility for a blind person to take up bookkeeping with any real understanding or hope of being able to use it vocationally, a few lessons on this subject will be sufficient. It will only be necessary to show them how to keep, in braille, a simple record of their own finance.

Most of the tests on arithmetic will have to be worked by the students in braille. This means that a seeing teacher will have to get someone else to read them to him for correction, if he is not able to read braille himself, which is usually the case. He may, however, give frequent mental drills, allowing the students to answer orally. This could easily be done in the manner of a competition and will help to motivate the class. The pupils should receive drill in the fundamentals of arithmetic in some manner during the high school course and it seems that the commercial arithmetic class is the best place in which to give this drill.

#### Commercial Law

"The subject of business law, be it considered from a practical, acultural, an educational, or a social angle, has splendid qualities to justify its inclusion in the high-school curriculum."<sup>1</sup> It is constantly useful to the business person in the conduct of his office duties and other affairs in his

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1. Kitson, H. "Commercial Education in Secondary Schools", p. 129.



business life. Educationally, it shows the gradual development of our present-day legal institutions from the early sources of law and the dependence of the present upon the past. Above all, it contributes to one of the important aims of all education, the development of an active citizenship.

The course should be taken in the senior year of the high school course, so that the student will have attained an age where he will have the maturity of judgment and breadth of experience essential to a fuller understanding of the subject. The high school course in law does not aim to train the pupils to the point where they will not need the services of a lawyer, it is rather to help them to become better business people and better citizens.

A knowledge and familiarity with legal terms will be useful to the boy or girl who may acquire a position in a law office, or where there is typing to be done which deals with legal matters. Many blind people take up the profession of law, and for the students who are interested in doing this, it will be a try-out course and will give them a basis for further study. For the blind student who intends to go into politics, it will be a decided help. Some knowledge of law will help the blind person to be more aware of legal pitfalls. He will be better able to care for himself and look out for his rights in spite of his affliction.

The study of law helps the student to train his reasoning abilities. Inasmuch as many of the cases are decided





differently, according to the laws of different states, the students are trained to give logical reasoning for the basis of their answers to test questions and are graded more on the correctness of their reasoning than on the answer to the point of law. The development of this ability is one of the biggest benefits to be derived from a study of law.

The topics which should be included in a high school course in commercial law are: contracts, sales, bailment, common carriers, insurance, guaranty, negotiable instruments, agency, and business associations. The subject of real property is rather technical for a class of high school students and may well be omitted for the student will derive little good from the study of this topic. One part of this topic, namely, landlord and tenant, should perhaps be treated briefly.

There are several of the law texts printed in braille by the American Publishing House for the Blind at Louisville, Kentucky, so that the teacher should have no trouble in getting a text to suit her wishes. A combination of the textbook and case methods is more suitable for students of high school age than the straight case method. The textbook elucidates the material so that the students can understand it more readily. The cases help to motivate the class work. They give the students a common basis for discussion, and a realization of the development of legal principles by confronting them with the actual situations which led to the



establishment of the principles.

If the teacher of law can arrange to have a mock trial at sometime during the course, he will find that the students will take more interest in the work. The trial can deal with some particular field of the law and be given before the whole school at an assembly period. The students will enjoy this and will learn much valuable information from working up the cases.

The course should be one of the most interesting subjects for both the teacher and the class. It is easily motivated and has a sufficient variety in its content to keep the work from becoming dull and uninteresting. It is a subject which has strong social values, in training the youth of the nation to become worthy citizens. Law is fairly easy for blind students to understand, and they should be able to profit from the course equally as much as normal students would. At the present time, a graduate of Perkins Institute and a senior at Boston University Law School is giving a course to the older boys at Perkins. This course is elective and is given in the evenings. It has proved to be quite popular.

#### Commercial Geography

In working with the blind, the author has found that they have a very poor conception of geographical factors of the country. They know that Virginia and Alabama are both in the southern part of the country, but they have no idea as





to their respective positions among the southern states, nor have they much idea of the geographical conditions of different localities. It is true that in the grade school, the blind children are given an excellent course in geography, that they have raised maps and other materials with which to work, but this training seems to have little carry-over value in later years. They really need a further course in geography during the high school course to fix much of the information in their minds.

Most schools for the blind are equipped with a museum of stuffed animals and birds, of products such as cotton, silk-worm cocoons and other products peculiar to certain localities. These articles may be used again in the commercial geography class to motivate the work and to illustrate the material studied. Groups of students may be given different countries or localities about which to find information and report in class. The schools for the blind are well equipped with libraries containing books in braille and they may go there for information. The children who live at home may have their parents help them look up information in encyclopedias or geographies. The students should be encouraged to bring in articles talked about in class whenever possible. Those from other localities may give talks on the climate, topography, crops, and industries of the place from which they come.

An occasional observation trip to a factory or some

to their respective positions among the various nations. The  
 first part of this of the investigation consisted in the  
 and collection. It is true that in the same group the  
 being collected for given in similar order in general,  
 that they may find some and other materials and  
 to work, but they believe that to have little over-  
 view in their hands. They realized a common basis in  
 geography, making the same subject matter of the same of the  
 information in their minds.

Most people in the office are employed in a group  
 of related subjects and many of them are working in  
 all-around groups and many subjects are given in certain in-  
 dicated. They realize that to have again in the same  
 groups and to have the same and to have the same  
 material worked. Some of the groups are in the same  
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particular place which would be characteristic of the locality in which the school is situated. But the teacher should have a definite purpose in selecting the place to be visited, and he should make it clear to the students before they start on the trip as to just what he wishes them to observe. There should be a brief lesson on the raw materials used at the factory, the places from which they come, why the factory is located in its present site, and other general information pertinent to the topic.

The teacher cannot hope to cover all the regions of the world in a commercial geography class and should emphasize principally the different sections of the United States. The student should be made familiar with the industries and products of his own state and township. A school that is situated in a large city has an excellent opportunity for studying the industries that are located there, and the pupils can learn much about the products of other regions by finding out the source of the raw materials and the markets for the finished goods.

The tests in commercial geography should be composed of objective questions, and the teacher should not make the material a mass of generalities.

Either or all of the three subjects which have been discussed in this chapter might well be included in the program of the schools for the blind. This can be done to good advantage, even though the school does not have a





definitely organized commercial department. These are subjects of general information, but they have some vocational value, as well. It seems that the schools for the blind would do well to include them in their programs wherever it is possible to do so.



## Chapter XV

## Testing

By the time the blind student has reached high school, he should be able to take all his tests on the typewriter. The teacher, in giving the tests, reads the question over as many times as he feels it to be necessary for the student to get the full meaning. The class is then allowed a certain length of time to answer each question, the length of time depending upon the difficulty of the question. The typing room will have to be made available for each class whenever it is ready to take a test. As it is not always convenient to do this, teachers of the blind are very likely to rely upon oral recitation for determining the grades for the students, instead of giving written tests. It is only fair to the students that they be given more frequent tests, for many pupils who are timid in oral work know the subject well, and will make a much better showing if they are given a chance to write out their answers.

It is quite possible to give simple true-false tests to the blind. The student may be instructed to indicate "false" by two points, and "true" by three points on the braille paper. These answers may be easily interpreted by the teacher, although he may have no knowledge of braille. Frequent tests will also help the teacher to motivate the work and to hold the interest of the students. When there are no typewriters available, the teacher may test the class by giving simple





competition tests. The answers should be written in braille and the students would exchange papers and grade each other's work. Occasionally the teacher could collect the papers and have them looked over by some one who is familiar with the braille. If the student thought that there was a chance of the teacher's seeing his grading, he would be more likely to grade fairly, and not to give a higher mark to one of his friends than the friend deserved.

When the students take their tests on the typewriter, they should be allowed ample time in which to think and write correctly on each of the questions. If the examination is an old type examination, the questions should be objective. The students should be asked to list four important exports of Marsailles, instead of "to tell all they can about articles exported from Marsailles." The subjective question is hard to score and is not always a fair test of the students' knowledge of the subject. Such a question is also more likely to be misunderstood by the student.

Most texts have tests on the material which is contained in them, and the teacher may make valuable use of them. Teachers of blind students may have to modify these tests, so as to make them more easily answered in braille. There are certain of the new-type tests which would not be very appropriate to attempt to give to the blind. This is especially the case with the matching test and the multiple choice test.



Another type of testing, which the students will enjoy and which will give them real opportunity for thought and planning, is to allow each of them to bring in a certain number of questions concerning the topic on which they are to be tested. The teacher may even grade each student on the questions that he brings in. This will stimulate the student to make the questions that he presents as good as possible. In attempting to do this, he will find it necessary to know the material more thoroughly, and will, therefore, study and review it more studiously. From the different lists of questions that the students bring in, the teacher can select a few of the best ones and give them to the whole group as a test. This will be an extra advantage for the student who turned in the best questions, for he will already know the correct answers to all of the ones that he has designed himself.

The aims and objectives of examinations might be classified as follows:

1. To test a pupil's knowledge of a particular subject.
2. To review and to impress the subject upon the mind of the pupil.
3. To teach pupils to think logically and to express their ideas in the same manner.
4. To standardize school procedure.
5. To check on the teacher's work with special reference to content matter and methods of marking and grading.





It is of paramount importance that the blind learn to think logically and to express their thoughts clearly as they write the answers, for after their answer is written on paper, they will have no chance to go over the work to make revisions and corrections of errors.

It is the opinion of the writer that all written work of the blind should be graded on the correctness of spelling, in addition to the grade on content matter. This will act as a constant check upon their spelling and will cause them to be studious in learning to spell.

Inasmuch as there is considerable difficulty in giving tests to the blind, the teacher should consider carefully every test before it is used, and be reasonably sure that it will be a true and fair criterion of the student's knowledge.

It is a common observation that the more they do

the more they do, and the more they do, the more they do.

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## Chapter XVI

## Conclusion

Until comparatively recent times, education for the blind was practically unthought of. The first constructive work in this field was begun by Haüy in the latter part of the eighteenth century. This movement was taken up by others, until, today, all civilized countries are endeavoring to give their blind the opportunity to become educated.

The first century of education for the blind was devoted principally to teaching them to use their fingers and in giving them a general knowledge of the classical subjects. According to an old fallacy, the blind were supposed to be born with a compensating talent for music. This resulted in the stressing of music in the schools for them. When one hears some of the results of the excellent training in music that they receive, it is not difficult to understand the origin of this fallacy.

A big stride in the progress of education for the blind is the gradual recognition of the fact that there are individual differences among them, the same as there are among normal people. Originally, all blind students were given the same training. They were taught to use their hands in such skills as weaving, broom-making, chair caning, and piano tuning, or given a thorough education in music, with the hope that they would be able to teach that subject to others. The fact that many of these students had no talent for either the



# CHAPTER I

## THEORY

The first object of this book is to show that the theory of the algebra of numbers is not a mere formalism, but that it has a deep and important meaning. The second object is to show that the theory of the algebra of numbers is not a mere formalism, but that it has a deep and important meaning. The third object is to show that the theory of the algebra of numbers is not a mere formalism, but that it has a deep and important meaning.

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handwork or music was not recognized. If they did not do well in one of these subjects, they were thought to be stupid and not capable of being educated at all.

Every blind student now receives a thorough training in the use of his hands while he is in the kindergarten and lower grades. He is required to take some handwork classes and to study some form of music, but if he does not like either of these subjects and is not successful at them, he may drop them and take up work for which he is better suited. Many blind students have been successful in colleges and business schools after graduation from high school. A considerable number have become successful as lawyers, and many have taken up teaching. Others have made progress as salesmen, office workers, and many other positions, not dependent upon hand work.

In this thesis, the writer has been particularly concerned with the group of blind who go into business of some form, whether it is in an office or a business of his own. He has tried to show that there is a sufficient number of these successful graduates, and a still larger number yet to come who will succeed in business, if given the proper training, to justify the existence of a sound course in commercial education in schools for the blind. It is evident, from the results of the questionnaire, material gathered from books on the subject, and information gained from talks with educators that commercial education for the blind has pro-



gressed rapidly during the past two decades. But it is still in its infancy, and will, in time, develop into a full-fledged recognized program.

Typewriting has already become firmly established as an essential course for blind students. Braille shorthand and dictaphone operating are gradually becoming part of the regular curriculum, and many of the schools have had considerable success with these two courses for a number of years. A large number of students have obtained positions due to the training received in these subjects.

Junior business training is a practical course, and should be required of all blind students. It is, however, but slightly developed in most schools, and it will probably be some time before it is generally accepted.

The social business subjects have a certain amount of value in training the mind of the students to think seriously on complicated and involved topics. These subjects help them to get a fuller understanding of the daily news events and to better appreciate civic life.

Boston University has been a popular school among the graduates of Perkins Institute. At the present time there is a blind boy in his senior year at Boston University College of Liberal Arts and there are four blind students at Boston University Law School, one of whom, Charles Eaton, graduated cum laude from the Journalism Department at the College of Business Administration in June, 1934. There are





now two blind students at this latter department. One of these, Peter Campbell, is taking the Business Administration course and is majoring in advertising. He is taking all the business subjects required, even accounting, although he never expects to be able to use the knowledge gained in this subject in any active way. Mr. Campbell is a strong advocate for business education for the blind.

One of the latest developments for facilitating the acquisition of an education by the blind is the invention of the "Talking Book", a combination electric phonograph and radio set. An average novel, running from 70,000 to 90,000 words can be recorded on between ten and twelve double-faced records, each of which can play eighteen minutes to a side. This will make it possible for the blind to be able to come in contact with more reading matter without the assistance of a reader.

The progress that has already been made in commercial education for the blind leads one to believe that it will receive much more attention in the future.



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June 13, 1933.

Miss Lorraine Geiger  
Villa Lorraine  
Oak Hill  
Pepperell, Massachusetts.

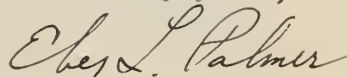
Dear Miss Geiger:

Under separate cover we are sending you copies of volumes 1, no. 5, 2, no. 5 and 3, no. 1 of the Teachers Forum for the Instructors of Blind Children which contain the articles which you recently requested. These copies sell for twenty cents each.

Are you familiar with the lending library of the American Foundation for the Blind? It contains approximately four thousand books and pamphlets regarding work for the blind in its various phases. I am sending you one of our "Reading Lists on Phases of the Education and Psychology of the Blind" which includes selected topics. Perhaps you might find something of value to you in your work for your master's thesis in this collection.

If you should care to buy any of the books which we have on hand, I should advise that you get in touch with Miss Helga Lende, our librarian. Miss Lende is at present on her vacation but will return around the first of July. In the meantime we could perhaps take care of your needs.

Very truly yours,



Eber L. Palmer  
Assistant Director.

ELP:FMK

(Transcribed by a blind typist.)





FIRST IN THE HEARTS OF HIS COUNTRYMEN





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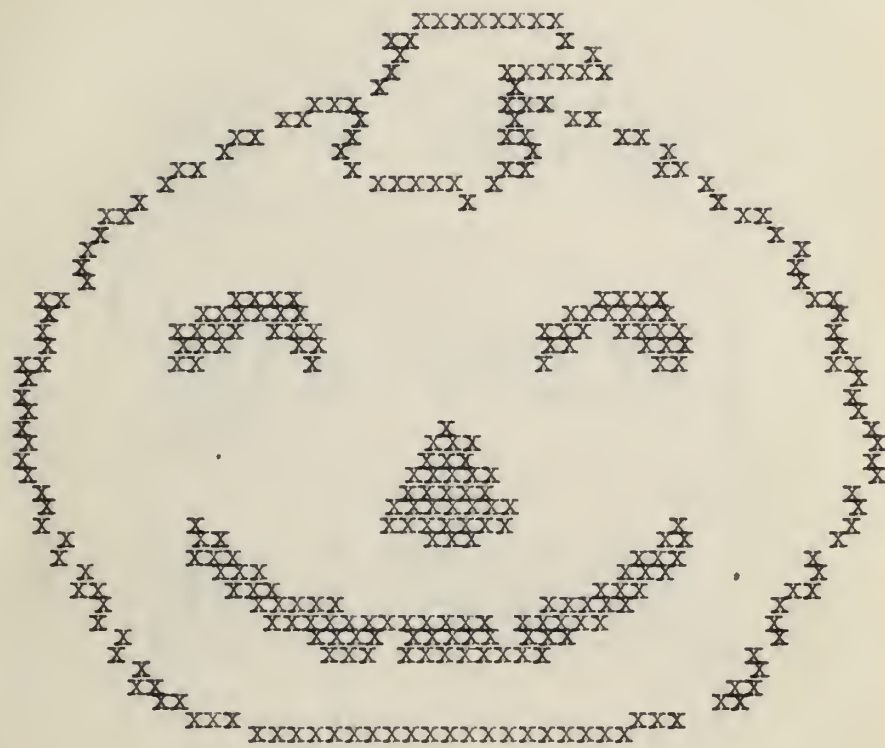
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## Percentage of Blind Self-Supporting According to Age in Minnesota

Age	Per Cent of Total			
	Male		Female	
	Wholly or Partly Self-Sup- porting	Wholly Self-Sup- porting	Partly Self-Sup- porting	Wholly Self-Sup- porting
Total	48.0	30.8	17.2	36.3
				25.9
				10.4
Under 16				
16-20	8.0	5.1	2.9	8.5
21-30	20.0	11.5	8.5	20.0
31-40	76.4	43.1	33.3	40.4
41-50	67.3	51.9	15.4	56.4
51-60	76.9	56.9	20.0	60.6
61-70	63.8	37.4	26.4	63.5
71-80	64.4	30.1	34.3	61.3
81-90	41.2	32.4	8.8	36.1
90 and over	51.5	36.3	15.2	100.0
	60.0	50.0	10.0	0.0
				0.0
				5.0
				10.0
				19.0
				24.4
				6.0
				15.8
				14.0
				4.2
				...
				0.0



# STANDARD SET OF MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS ON REPRODUCTION

Length 20 items (10)

Question		Answer		Key	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Which of the following is not a part of the male reproductive system?	1. Testis	2. Vas Deferens	3. Uterus	4. Epididymis	5. Scrotum
2. Which of the following is not a part of the female reproductive system?	1. Ovary	2. Fallopian Tube	3. Uterus	4. Vagina	5. Penis
3. Which of the following is not a part of the male reproductive system?	1. Testis	2. Vas Deferens	3. Uterus	4. Epididymis	5. Scrotum
4. Which of the following is not a part of the female reproductive system?	1. Ovary	2. Fallopian Tube	3. Uterus	4. Vagina	5. Penis
5. Which of the following is not a part of the male reproductive system?	1. Testis	2. Vas Deferens	3. Uterus	4. Epididymis	5. Scrotum
6. Which of the following is not a part of the female reproductive system?	1. Ovary	2. Fallopian Tube	3. Uterus	4. Vagina	5. Penis
7. Which of the following is not a part of the male reproductive system?	1. Testis	2. Vas Deferens	3. Uterus	4. Epididymis	5. Scrotum
8. Which of the following is not a part of the female reproductive system?	1. Ovary	2. Fallopian Tube	3. Uterus	4. Vagina	5. Penis
9. Which of the following is not a part of the male reproductive system?	1. Testis	2. Vas Deferens	3. Uterus	4. Epididymis	5. Scrotum
10. Which of the following is not a part of the female reproductive system?	1. Ovary	2. Fallopian Tube	3. Uterus	4. Vagina	5. Penis













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*Commercial education*

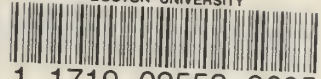
*for the blind*

DATE	ISSUED TO
2/20	John M. Mowbray
	General Pers.
3/20	General Pers.
8/9	John H. Fudge
11/11	Charles H. Fudge
11/12	Wm. B. Fudge
3/15	Miss Nelson
1-	General Pers.
2/20	Mr. Fudge
2.15	Leonard Green
1.50	" "
5:30	Stone, Carolyn
2:10	" "

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